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Gangetic Valley Terracotta Art

By

Dr Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, M. A., Ph. D.

Curator, Patna Museum.

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Gupta



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PREFACE

Terracotta art widely spread in India from the remote past and has continued unabated till today. It is now confined only to toys for children and in some cases to a few religious figurines; and that too is now fading fast with the emergence of synthetic plastic media and machanical devices for the mass production of the various kinds of objects. However, in the past, it was the most convenient and cheapest medium of art; the craftsmen expressed their skill in this medium in depicting contemporary social, cultural and religious life of the people. The terracotta figurines of the ancient days are thus the most valuable and authentic records of the art and cultural history of their times. But they are known to us only from their survivals that lie buried under the earth and occasionally come to light in chance exposures and diggings or in archaeological excavations.

While much is available about the sophisticated lithic and metal art to read, little is available about the terracottas, the poorman's art. What is available about them in writing are only casual notices in the Archaeological Reports and Museum Catalogues or a few stray articles in various journals. Therefore a book like the present one hardly needs any explanation. But as an author, who is otherwise unknown in the field of art, I feel, I must say a few words about the work.

This subject was introduced to me some times in the thirties of the century, in a most unusual manner, when I was not even a matriculate and knew nothing of art and culture. I was then residing in my native town Azamgarh (U. P.). At Ghosi, an ancient mound in my district, a Sub-Divisional officer and Deputy Magistrate, Rameshwar Dayal by name, accidentally discovered, during one of his village tours, a huge accumulation of terracotta figurines.

This was a great archaeological discovery for the people of that backward area, and the news floated in the air like anything. It aroused my curiosity and I went to that officer. Many baskets, full of charming heads about thousand years old, were then shown to me. They fascinated me so much that I opted, more than a decade later, in about 1949-50, '*Clay Figurines of the Gangetic Valley*' as the subject of my dissertation for the M.A Examination at the Banaras Hindu University in lieu of two papers in Art and Architecture, for which then there was none in the department to teach.

To prepare that dissertation, I visited some of the Museums of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal and looked at the terracotta art material deposited there; later I went to Delhi to seek the guidance of the late Dr. Vasudeva Sharana Agrawala, who was then in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum. He gave me his kind and affectionate guidance. The outcome was this little work which is only an outline of the subject. It brought me first class marks in the examination and high appreciation from the examiners Dr. R. C. Majumdar and Prof. S.K. Saraswati. I felt satisfied and never thought of its publication.

Its publication now, after more than two decades of its writing, is due to great insistence on the part of some of my friends, who teach Indian Art at various universities to post-graduate classes. They need something which might help them in teaching the terracotta art and for their students in addition to the class notes. This little work would serve this purpose to some extent. Vast amount of new material has come to light since this work was prepared. So, my personal feeling had been that a book on the subject written afresh would be more useful. But my interest has been diverged in other directions and I am presently not competent to undertake such a study. Thus I bowed before the wishes of my friends and let this work go into print, very much in the same form as it was originally produced; only some minor changes have been made here and there.

Perhaps, this work would not have been before you, had not Dr. P. K. Agrawala taken upon himself the responsibility of editing this work through all the processes of printing and publication with all sincerity. I must say that if this publication deserves any credit, that all should go to him; but if there are any omissions and errors, the responsibility is mine; they are due to my own limitations, for which I seek readers' forbearance.

Lastly, let me hope that this work would fulfil the desires of my friends. I shall feel gratified if this work could help, even a little in any manner, the students of Indian Art.

I express my gratitude to the authorities of the various museums and scholars, who had given me all kinds of facilities when I was working on this monograph. Time has so much passed since then that it is not possible for me to mention all of them by name. For this I seek their apologies.

Patna Museum, Patna.
15th May 1972.

Parmeshwari Lal Gupta

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Chapter I ANTIQUITY AND DIFFUSION

Introduction

Clay is one the most easily accessible media of man's artistic expression since times immemorial. Clay toys or figurines showing men and animals have been found at many ancient sites, both in India and outside. The antiquities from the ancient sites in Crete, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, China etc. comprise a vast number of clay figurines. In India, the antiquity of clay figurines goes back to chalcolithic and neolithic periods. Clay, being so pliable to use, offered a handy and convenient medium to the potter as well as the modeller for making figurines of any desired shape.

Sculpture is one of the traditional arts of India. Side by side its expression in stone, the clay figurines also have an esteemed art history owing to their great number, variety, and almost universal presence, particularly throughout northern India, with which area we propose to delimit our present study of Indian terracotta art.

The clay figurines of each period of India's long history share the characteristic feature of the art style prevailing in a particular period, but at the same time they are marked by regional distinctions both in style and type. A systematic study of the clay figurines made on regional basis is likely to prove a fruitful source of art and cultural history. No less than fiftythree sites in the valley of Ganges have yielded terracotta objects in great abundance. The main centres of this plastic art were at Mathura in the Śūrasena Janapada, Ahichchhatra in the Pāñchāla, Kauāmbī in the Vatsa, Rājghat in the Kāśī, Ghosi (district Azamgarh) in the east Kosala, Śrāvastī in the north Kosala, Buxar and Pātāliputra in the Magadha. In Bengal small plaques and clay-

figurines that have come to light at ancient sites are comparatively few in number, perhaps owing to the limited nature of the exploratory work carried out in this region. But the evidence for later periods in the form of bigger plaques, more or less of architectural nature, is indeed of considerable profusion.

The Dating And Classification

Most of the objects of the clay-art, known from above sites were found not as a result of systematic excavations, excepting the material found at Ahichchhatra. They are stray finds from the ancient mounds. The absence of archaeological evidence is a serious handicap in the precise dating of these figurines. We have to depend on the evidence of technique for dating and classifying these figurines. The clay figurines of the Śuīga, Kushāṇa and Gupta periods are varied and plentiful, and related stylistically to the stone sculpture of the respective periods. Such affinities have already been noted by scholars. But the same cannot be said in respect of the 'archaic' figurines of which the style is unrelated to sculpture.

Until recently, none of the sites like Mathura, Kaśī, Kauśāmbī, Hastināpura, Ahichchhatra, Kāmpilya etc., which are known to have been flourishing towns at least since the Mahābhārata period, i.e. from *circa* fourteenth century B.C., was properly excavated. But during last few years at least three of the sites, namely Ahichchhatra, Kauśāmbī and Hastināpura have been properly excavated. The excavations at these sites and the explorations at twenty other sites (allegedly of Mahābhārata antiquity) in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Hariyana, have brought to light from the lowest levels a type of pottery baked grey with designs executed in black, along with the 'Northern Black Polished' pottery datable on the basis of stratigraphy from the fifth century B. C. This suggests that the culture of the

'Grey painted pottery', in its later phase, was contemporary to the culture of N. B. P. and had subsisted from an earlier period¹ which may go back in its origins as early as the Mahābhārata period; but to this effect corroborative evidence is yet to be found. However, the clay figurines, with which we are concerned here, are not found associated with this type of pottery from any of these sites.

The prolific excavations at Ahichchhatra yielded the grey pottery from the stratum datable prior to 300 B. C.; but, however, no specimens of clay figurine were found in this stratum. The earliest stratum of this site yielding clay figurines is dated between 300 and 200 B. C.² The excavations at Kausāmbī also do not take us earlier than this date. The lower levels of Hastināpura (before 300 B. C.) are also devoid of any clay figurines.³

Pāṭaliputra is another important site, though not so old as the places already referred to above; nevertheless it has an antiquity which goes anterior to the Mauryas. The excavations in this area at Bulandibagh and Kumrahar were conducted to assess the archaeological chronology and they yielded a number of clay figurines, but their associated finds do not take us to the pre-Mauryan period.⁴ Besides these archaeological excavations, a long trench was dug for laying drainage confining though in breadth to a few feet only, in length it stretched over a long area covering Kadamakuan, Bakarganj, Bhikanāpahāri, Musallāpur and

1. Krishnadeva and R. E. M. Wheeler, "Northern Black Polished Ware", *Ancient India*, No. 1, p. 58.

2. V. S. Agrawala, "Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra", *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 107.

3. *Ancient India*, Nos. 10-11, pp. 6 ff.; G. R. Sarma, *The Excavations at Kausāmbī*, Allahabad, 1960.

4. *A.S.I., A. R.*, 1915-16, p. 14 ff.; 1917-18, p. 27 ff.

Golakpur. A number of clay figurines were collected from this sewer trench. But the only object hitherto known to have come from this trench and offering more or less a definite evidence towards dating some of the associated clay figurines is a steatite plaque with Mauryan characters.¹

A. Banerjee-Sastri carried out an excavation at Buxar on the bank of the Ganges and its results were published by him under the title "Remains of a pre-historic civilisation in the Gangetic Valley".² He attributed a number of clay figurines found there to the pre-historic period. In support of his suggestion he observed that the find-spots of most of the figurines were 52 feet underneath the surface of the river side, whereas Brāhmī seals with the characters of third century B. C. were found by him at the depth of 32 feet. Even if one assumes that the data given by him were correctly recorded, the depth alone of the find-spots does not help any scientific dating of the Buxar clay figurines, and the site on the river bank was immensely disturbed by the river action. The Ganges during floods seems to have cut away the original level in which the figurines were once deposited and transferred them to its bed at much lower levels. Thus, these figurines are to be taken as totally cut off from their original stratigraphical context, and can offer no evidence to any pre-historic antiquity of the Ganges Valley terracotta art.

However, the history of clay figurines in the Gangetic Valley can hardly be taken back to a period earlier than 300 B. C.

1. K. P. Jayaswal, "Terracottas dug out at Patna", *J. I. S. O. A.*, 1935, p. 125ff.

2. *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society*, 1930; *Puṣhak Commemorative Volume*, 1934. An excavation at Buxar was again taken up recently by Dr B. P. Sinha and colleagues and a paper on the results has appeared in *Nagpur Museum Centenary Volume*, 1964, p. 52.

From this period the art of clay figurines flourished with remarkable richness throughout the succeeding periods of Indian art history. The archaeological excavations at Ahichchhatra and now Rajghat have yielded rich materials that bear out evidence of a continued history of terracotta art particularly at these two sites up to 1000 A. D. But the evidence available for the period from 700 A.D. onwards is comparatively meagre and after 1000 A.D. the rich tradition of Indian terracotta art in northern India appears to have lost its fascination and artistic charm.

Chapter II

ART AND TECHNIQUE

Preparation Of Clay

The use of clay for making images has been described in the Indian treatises on iconography and *Śilpaśāstra* of the early medieval period¹. They inform that the clay required certain treatment before it was taken up for any domestic or plastic work. In these texts various methods of preparing the clay for making figures and images are described in proper details.

According to the *Silparatna*, prescribing the method of preparing the clay for terracotta *lingas* (*pakva-linga*), the good earth fit for use should be procured and well ground; then it should be left over for a month in *pañchagavya* (i. e. milk, curd, clarified butter, cow-urine and cow-dung), and afterwards burnt in fire.² Another kind of clay with certain other ingredients is also described in the text for making durable clay images without firing. The ingredients to prepare such clay are grains of barley, wheat, *Masha* (a kind of pulse), *guggula*, extract of lac, pumpkin, *ayama* (*syamaka*, a kind of rice?), *Kunduru*, *pañchagavya* and oil. The method of manufacture was as follows:—The clay should be kneaded for about a fortnight and left over for a month; after that image should be made out of it and dried for a month

1. *Matsya Purana*, chs. 258-263; *Bhaviṣṭya Purana*, 1. 131.1-8; *Sukranitisara*, IV. 4. 72; *Gopala Bhatta*, *Haribhakti Vilasa* etc.

2. *Silparatna* (T. Ganapati Sastri's edition), part II, p. 6, verses 49-50.

in the sun.¹ The images of unburnt clay have been found in big sizes at Nalanda, and were most probably manufactured in this way.

Gopālabhaṭṭa in his *Haribhakti Vilasa* has quoted, from the *Hayasirsa-pancharatra*, another formula for making clay images :- "Members of all castes from the highest downwards should collect earth from river banks, cultivated fields or sacred places; then equal portions of stone, *karkara* (grit) and iron should be mixed with it and the whole should be mixed with astringents like extracts of *Khadira* (catechu), *Arjuna*, *Sri Venta* (?), *Kumkuma*, *Kutaja*, *Ayasa* (filing of iron), curd, milk and clarified butter; the whole should be repeatedly stirred up and be left over for a month till it is ready to be shaped into images".² This mode of preparing clay, however, shows that material thus prepared was used for making images more durable than the ordinary clay figurines, some of its constituents being iron pieces and stone.

These recipes were obviously intended for making clay images of colossal size, such as exist at Nalanda, and not for smaller clay figurines and toys.

It may be pointed out here that in modern times the potters mix cotton and oil with the clay for modelling, and use finely kneaded clay for making figurines from moulds. Though the material of the old clay figurines has not yet been scientifically analysed, yet careful examination shows that early terracottas are usually made of finely kneaded clay. They may have cotton mixed in the clay, but the post-Gupta clay figurines are mostly made of coarse clay with considerable admixture of husk. Kramrisch thinks that the clay

1. *Ibid.*, verses 44-48.

2. *Haribhakti Vilasa*, 18th vilasa.

was carefully washed with the admixture of mica as the main gritty material to avoid cracking when it was fired.¹

The Method Of Manufacture

About the technique of manufacturing the clay figurines our literary sources are silent. But we can know well about it by examining the figurines themselves and the methods present now. The clay figurines are made either by hand, or in moulds, or by a combination of both the techniques.

Modelling. There are two methods of making clay figurines by hand. Either the figures are wholly modelled by hand, or in some portions a tool-like scrapper is used. In the first case the modeller takes up the clay and makes the shape that he intends, using only his fingers, as such the figures are naturally crude. But if he uses a scrapper, he scrapes away the surplus clay from the model and incises the eyes and other details of dress, ornaments etc. The making of such details required greater skill, labour and patience.

Moulding. The moulded figures are pressed out of moulds, which in turn can only be made with the aid of models. The moulds are made by squeezing clay on the model, and are then baked and subsequently used for making copies or duplicates of the original figure.

What types of model were used to make moulds in ancient days is difficult to suggest, as no shop for making or selling clay figurines has yet come to light in excavations. They might have been of any material like clay, wax, wood or stone. Wax (*madhu-uchchhishta*) is described as the material for the model of metal images (*cire perdue* process). Whether it was used for clay moulds must remain a moot point. The moulds for metal images were made hollow, so it was but natural to use wax, which could melt away after the mould was

1. S. Kramrisch, "Indian terracottas", *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VII, p. 104.

prepared. On the contrary no such necessity arose for the mould of clay figurines. Wax may have been used if at all in the case of clay figurines, only in certain peculiar cases.

Stone as a material for plastic expression is known to us from the Mauryan period. But the early lithic art is represented by colossal statues and columns, and we meet with no sculpture of handy size which would indicate that the clay sculptors were taking up lithic models for the terracotta moulds.

Bharhut, Mathura, Sanchi, Amaravati etc. have supplied sufficient data to show that the earliest plastic activities in India succeeded the use of wood, a material which is often mentioned in the iconographic texts as a suitable material for making images. In Vedic period, wood was the principal material for making the ritual implements. Referring to the material out of which God Viśvakarmā would have created the universe, one that comes foremost to the mind of Vedic seers is wood. The sage asks, 'Which was the forest and what was the tree out of which the heaven and earth were made?'¹ It is therefore very likely that the models of wood were used by the potters for their clay figure-moulds. But wooden images of such an early date have not been found so far.²

Clay would have been the best and easiest material for making the matrix or mould by the potter-artist; but the earliest clay models are very crude and do not display any quality or that skill which is seen in the moulded figurines. No modelled figurines of such an early date have been found as yet which could match with the moulded figurines.

1. *Rigveda* X. 81. 4.

2. Recently a wooden female figurine had been found near the bank of the Ganges at Patna which, though much worn, may be compared well with some of the early terracotta figurines. It is suggested to be Mauryan in date, and is now in the private collection of Shri Gopi Krishna Kanodia of Calcutta.

The only known material in which the small figurines approximately of the size of most of the moulded figurines are found is soap-stone. I have seen soap-stone figurines of the very type that we find in clay, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan (Banaras Hindu University), and such also hail from Kauśāmbī and may be assigned in style to the Śuṅga period. One of them shows a standing couple, which is much alike in style to clay plaque No. 2383 of the Mathura Museum depicting a *dampati*. Two other soap-stones carved in the same style with single depiction each of a standing male and a female are also known. These figurines are engraved on both sides and evince that such small pieces of soap-stone showing figures were made in this period besides moulded figurines of clay. Therefore it is likely that such soap-stone figurines as mentioned above served as models of the moulds for producing similar terracotta figurines. There are a number of fine specimens of clay plaques. However, it does not seem possible that in clay or any other such material the same fineness was accomplished without the aid of soap-stone models. The Śakuntalā medallion of Bhita, the Udayana-Vasavadattā plaques of Kausambi, the terracotta female of the Indian Institute, Oxford, are some of the examples of clay art which could not have been moulded unless their moulds had the minutest and the finest details. Such moulds were presumably prepared with the help of soap-stone originals. Sir John Marshall, who discovered the Śakuntalā medallion, was of opinion that its mould was probably in ivory. He had no doubts that this was just the sort of work that was being turned out at the time by the ivory-carvers of Vidiśā who were employed upon some of the works at Sanchi.¹

However, the method of making figurines through moulds is the simplest. Once the mould is prepared from the model, wet clay is pressed into the mould, and this produces on the clay the impression of one side of the figure,

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1911-12, pp. 35-36.

usually the front. A wide margin is left around the edge as background, so that the figure appears to be in relief. In some of the figurines of this type, the background is cut away close to the outline of the figure. The back is roughly shaped by hand or is pared with scrappers. The figurines made out of this process are known in abundance from the Śunga to post-Gupta periods.

Use of Double-mould. While single moulds were used to make the figurines in relief, double moulds came in use for making the figurines in the round. The double moulds are commonly used even to-day in the manufacture of clay figurines, but their use in ancient times appears to have been rare in the Gangetic plains. The simplest method of production from double moulds is by pressing two moulds on a solid core of clay and then paring the surplus clay with a sharp instrument which leaves the mark of cutting along the entire joint. Another method of producing the figures from double moulds is the pressing of clay into two different moulds for the front and the back separately as to form hollow shells. A margin of clay is left around their joining edge. After detaching the casts from the moulds, the two halves are joined together laterally by wetting the edge (or by adding a slip of thinned clay to the adjunct surface) and pinching it together. The surplus clay around the edge is then pared off. Sometimes the figure is moulded in two halves frontally and joined along the ridge of the nose. This method is seen applied mostly in manufacturing animal and only rarely human figures.

From a mould a number of casts could be made. But several figurines made from one and the same mould are seldom exactly identical to each other, and exhibit slight variations, either unintentional or deliberate. The former may be due to the carelessness in pressing the clay into the mould (so that an imperfect impression results from), in removing it from the mould, or during the finishing before firing.

Apart from the paring of the seams, which can be seen only in some cases, clay-modellers gave little finishing touches to the figures after the casting was over. Sometimes details of drapery worked over with an instrument or bits of clay were added and smoothened over to remedy the defects in casting.

Finishing. The figures were finished in varying degrees of details. Before the baking took place the surface was covered with a thin slip of clay, which gave it a deeper red colour or rich black shine. The slip was either applied with a brush made of crushed bamboo fibre or by dipping the figure in the solution. Sometimes red or black was applied to fired surface having the same colour. At times a thick black or red bright polish is seen on the terracotta surface.

Baking. After the finishing, clay plaques, panels and figurines were baked in fire. The majority of them are fired to various shades of ochre or red colour. But there are many figurines which are grey or black. The colour of the clay objects depended upon the chemical components in the clay and also the change it underwent during the process of firing. If the air has free access during firing to the iron contents in the clay, it is oxidised and produces the red colour. If the kiln is closed and air has no access or little access, the terracotta is grey or black. The latter process was widely practised; charcoal was kept glowing around an earthen vessel in which the clay object to be baked was kept and covered with husk. In the figures which were made hollow either by the process of double moulds or by free modelling, a hole or outlet was provided to permit the escape of hot expanding gases. It was usually made in the bottom of the figure.

Most of the pre-Kushāṇa terracottas of Mathura are of grey and black colour, sometimes with a black slip which however easily rubs off. At all other sites, the majority of

terracottas show various shades of red colour with or without red slip. Light grey terracotta objects, however, have been found also at Patna, Kausambi and Ayodhya; objects burnt to a rich black colour come from Patna and Basarh and dark grey terracottas occur sporadically at Buxar, Patna etc. The grey and black objects are rare in post-Suāga period and are hardly met in the Gupta period. In general they may be said to antedate the red ones, though sometimes figurines of the same type are found in black and red simultaneously. The Gupta terracottas have got a peculiar ochre-deep biscuit colour of their own, and they can generally be recognised by this colour besides the characteristic style. In the post-Gupta period one finds terracotta figures of large size, mostly baked in black or grey. The inner clay is invariably grey, while the outer portion or surface has a thin layer, baked buff or red.

Polychromy. Traces of polychrome colouring are found in some of the Mohenjo-daro terracotta figurines.¹ In the historic period the female heads painted in colour and of Gupta age were unearthed at Shahgird near Begram (ancient Kapi'sā, about 50 miles north of Kabul) in Afghanistan and are now displayed in the Kabul Museum.² In the Gangetic plain, it is known from the early Kushāṇa period and was more vogue in the Gupta period, and continued in the Pala period. Two fragments from Mathura of the Kushāṇa period, now in Patna Museum, show remnants of silver and gold respectively with which they were coated (or else the gold was employed in the polychromy of the plaques).³ John Marshall unearthed the painted clay figurines of Gupta period from Bhita.⁴ Some of the clay figurines from

1. H. Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro*, p. 260.

2. Rahula Sankrityayana, *Afghanistan ki Prachina Samskriti*, *Nagari Pracharini Patrika*, Vol. XLIV, p. 207.

3. S. Kramrisch, "Indian Terracottas" *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VII. p. 164.

4. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12.

Rajghat (Banaras) also show on them painted lines and preserve various colours. The colours on them are not mere slips or daubs made by the potters but reveal the skilled use of brush. Unfortunately the number of painted specimens is very small. Sārī, for instance, is painted in wavy bands of red and white; the breast-band (kuchapaṭṭikā) is indicated in black. On the figure of a small boy the short loin-cloth is marked by vertical bands in alternating colours.¹ Both these designs can also be traced in the Ajanta painting.² On some female busts the painter has indicated in fine black lines the hair and also armlets, torques and necklaces falling on the breasts (stana-hāra). In others the eye-brows and the lines of eye-lids are marked in clear black colour.³ At Ahichchhatra also, figurines with the traces of colour have been found. Striped bands could be detected on a female torso, both on the neck and on the sides of the breasts, the whole forming a bodice of stirped pattern.⁴ A female image of Gupta period from Kasia, now in Lucknow Museum, has the traces of colour. On one of the colossal unbaked clay images of Buddha at Nalanda, belonging to the Pāla period, colour was noticed. It is not unlikely that other sites too may have had the painted clay figurines. Either they were spoiled during the long period of their burial, or if they had any traces left, during their cleaning they were washed off due to inadvertance of the excavators. It may be interesting to note here that we find a reference to the painted clay figurine by Kālidāsa in his *Sakuntala*. He has referred to the painted clay peacock (*varnachitrīta mrīttika-mayūra*) of the child sage Mārkaṇḍeya.⁵

1. V. S. Agrawala, "Rajghat Terracottas", *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. XI, p. 9.

2. Raja of Aundh, *Ajanta*, pls. 65, 69.

3. *Op. cit.*, pls. 9-10.

4. V. S. Agrawala, *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 146.

5. *Sakuntala*, Act. VII.

The painted colours are invariably laid on a primary coating of some natural colour which is usually soft spinaceous earth commonly known as 'Multānī-maṭṭī.' On some ancient terracotta figurines the primal coating seen is of white lime. The other coating gave polish and fixity to the colour. A scientific test is yet to be made of the colours of ancient clay-figurines to know how far they resemble the pigments of the wall paintings of the contemporary period. It, however, as pointed out by Dr. Agrawala, appears that, *hirmachi* and *geru* were used to produce the red paint to which Kālidāsa refers as *Dhaturaga* (*Meghaduta*, II. 42). *Ramraj* was used for light yellow and *manahsila*, an arsenic colour, for bright yellow. Bāṇabhaṭṭa speaks of deep yellow colour produced from *manahsila* (*Harishchārīta*, p. 103). For green we have orpiment or powdered verdigris (*jangala*) and black was invariably obtained from *Kajal* or lamp black."¹

1. V. S. Agrawala, *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. XI, p. 11.

Chapter III

THE ARCHAIC OR PRIMITIVE FIGURINES

Of the so-called 'archaic' or 'primitive' clay figurines in India only a few may be primitive from the viewpoint of age or chronology for such figurines of archaic form have continued to be made throughout the history. They are known from various sites and may range in date from pre-historic times to the present day. These figurines are roughly modelled and roughly pinched in clay to the desired shape by hand as children work in dough. Moulds are seldom employed in their manufacture. They comprise human and animal figurines. Broadly speaking, they appear to be similar to the terracottas of considerable antiquity found in other countries. But a closer examination of their style and technique shows that the similarity is only superficial. Although distinguished by their primitive form there can still be traced in such figurines from various centres a distinction of style, and also some chronological sequence could be made out. Some characteristic figurines of this type from various sites in the Gangetic valley are described below.

Bhita. The simplest type of archaic clay figurines are from Bhita. They are shaped like fish-star, flattened on back and front with four points marking the ends of the arms and the legs, and the whole topped with rounded outline, which forms the head. The face is pinched up so that nose ridge results. They are devoid of any sex indication like breasts etc. (*Fig. 1*). These figurines are generally 1 to 1½ inches in height and are found in abundance. Basket-fuls of such figurines collected from this place are now in the Allahabad Museum.¹ But it is strange that not a single specimen of this type was found by Marshall during his excavations of this site

1. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 13.

in 1911-12. It is not unlikely that these figurines be post-Gupta and much late in date.

A few such figurines have also been found at Kausambi and Rajghat (Banaras), but they are a bit longish (*Fig. 2*). Such figurines cannot be assigned a date in absence of any stratigraphical evidence.

Kausambi. At Kausambi we get a type of primitive clay figurines, unknown at any other site of the Gangetic valley. Their outstanding feature is the applique-incised eyes, formed by fixing oval pellets of clay to the face and incising them from nose to ear with a sharp instrument. This type has either no chin or has a rudimentary one; there is either applique mouth or no mouth at all. S. C. Kala has described two figurines of this type. One of them is a bust having applique-incised eyes and executed in light grey colour. In this specimen no chin, mouth or breast is indicated. It has an applied and incised flat torque on the neck (AM 259). The other is a female figure with a long face with applique-incised eyes. It has a long ear and applied necklace, both being composed of a single strip of clay.¹ Col. Gordon found a few such figurines at Sar Dheri and has dated them on certain archaeological evidence to a date not prior to 200 B.C.²

Pataliputra. Some small archaic figurines, known from Pataliputra, were discovered during a digging of a trench in Patna town. They are made of a single lump of clay, pressed by hand as to divide the clay into three parts. The top part showing the head is less pressed and the face is pinched and has two small holes for eyes. The hands are absent, but the legs are drawn out of the lower part like two stumps. ³

1. *Ibid.*, p. 14, pl. I. 4; II A.

2. D. H. Gordon, "Early Indian Terracottas", *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. XI pp. 183-185.

3. *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VII, pl. VII, fig. 4.

This type had further developed in some other figurines, which are smooth and flat with lines and ringlets incised on the neck and the waist showing necklace and girdle. Some have their hands on breasts and the others on hip.¹ These are most probably much later than the earlier type.

A third variety of archaic type from Pataliputra is represented by a torso, found in the same trench digging. This is modelled by hand out of a single lump of clay to divide the body into three distinct parts. The head over the neck is missing. The central part probably had two arms, which are also missing. It has an enormously developed hip with a girdle. An arch separates the legs which are tapering. It has no sex indication. This may well be compared with the first type of archaic figurines from Mathura described below.

Basarh. The early excavations at Basarh (ancient Vaisali) did not yield any figurine which may be described as primitive or archaic; but the later excavations conducted in 1950 and 1958-62, brought forth some figurines of this type. The figurines found in the 1950 excavations were mostly broken and incomplete;² but the 1958-62 excavations yielded a number of figurines in a quite good condition³. They all are of biscuit colour⁴; their body is divided into three distinct parts out of a lump of clay. They have small head with pinched nose, the lower end is pricked with two small holes for the nostrils. The mouth is made by pressing the thumb. Some of them have also a short slit-mark for the mouth. The eyes are incised with pupils marked by punched circlets. The hair is indicated by applied stripes on the back as well as on the sides; and they have in some cases

1. *Ibid.*, figs. 4-6.

2. K. Deva and V. K. Misra, *Vaisali Excavations* : 1950, p. 50-51, pl. XII.

3. B. P. Sinha and S. R. Ray, *Vaisali Excavations*, 1958-62, p. 153-54, pl. XI.

4. The excavators have called it 'Red'.

some kind of incisions also. They have prominent breasts (some having circlets punched for the nipples¹), slender waist (a deep navel in some cases²), broad hips and stump-like legs. Almost all the figurines wear torque, necklace and girdle, executed in applique, and ornamented by the impressions of vertical streaks, circlets or rosettes. A few of the figurines, besides the applied ornaments have additional torques and girdles of impressed circlets³. In a rare case only the incised necklace and girdle of dots are seen⁴. A few also have applied ear-ornaments impressed with rosettes⁵.

These figurines may be compared with some of the figurines known from Mathura and Ahichchhatra. Though these figurines are known from excavations, precise date for them cannot be suggested. The excavators of 1958-62 have placed them in a period which covers a wide span of 600 B. C. to 200 B. C. In the excavations of 1959, most of the figurines were found in mixed deposits; only two were known from stratified levels, which the excavators dated to 150 B. C.—100 A. D.

Mathura. The simplest archaic figurine found at Mathura has the head over a conspicuous neck, which is devoid of any ornament, and has hair indicated by indentations on the slightly slanted ridge above the forehead. The nose is formed by pinching the clay so that it forms a continuous projection from the forehead, which is in a horizontal plain. The eyes are marked by two converging lines with the pupils indicated in the centre. The mouth is an inconspicuous depression. The figurine has no ears. Below the neck the arms are horizontally extended and taper irregularly like the ends of a screw-drive; the breasts and hips are enormously developed.

1. *Ibid.*, pl. XL, fig. 3, 6.

2. *Ibid.*, pl. XL, fig. 1.

3. *Ibid.*, pl. XL, fig. 6.

4. *Vaisali Excavations*, 1950, pl. XII B, & fig. 5.

5. *Ibid.*, pl. XII A, fig. 4; 1958-62, pl. XL, fig. 4, 8.

An arch separates the legs, which are dwarfish in proportion. A slight curve is at the end of the legs for the feet. The navel is indicated by a punch or perforation. Of ornaments only a girdle is shown with various simple patterns of lines or circles enclosed with or without horizontal lines. One rather complete specimen of this type is in the Mathura Museum (Kt. 161)¹ (Fig. 3). Two fragments of this type were found in the excavations at Ahichchhatra, both of them showing only lower portion with the girdle (Nos. 8934, 8797).² One of them was found in the stratum of 300-200 B. C. and the second in the stratum of 200-100 B. C.

The second type consists of those figurines which have a pronounced animal appearance. The nose is ponderous and jutting out like a clumsy beak. The perforations for the nostrils are in the depression, which marks out the mouth. The hair is indicated at the back in strands. The eyes are incised in lenticular shape without the marks for pupil. The ears are applique; round the neck is a conspicuous necklace; applied breasts are with nipples, indicated by circlets. The arms taper downwards and do not extend horizontally. A fragmentary figurine of this type is in the Mathura Museum (MM 2220).³

Similar to this is another figurine which has an additional peculiarity of the punched circles over the body, which most likely represent some sort of dress. This figurine has the pinched ears instead of applique; it has a single collar and no necklace. The collar has a central disc punched with minute circlets. The breasts are applied, prominent and separated by a deep valley and have nipple-marks. The girdle is indicated by punched circlets. Legs appear like tapering stumps but markedly separate (MM 2587)⁴ (Fig. 4).

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1. V. S. Agrawala, "Mathura Terracottas", *J. U. P. H. S.*, p. 13, fig. 1.
 2. *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 107, figs. 2, 3.
 3. "Mathura Terracottas," p. 13, fig. 2.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 14, fig. 3.

Then comes the variety with decorated hair. These figurines have the nose in continuance with the forehead and show a pig-like appearance, produced by pinching the clay. Mouth is merely a depression, v-shaped in profile. The eyes are incised and diamond-shaped. These figurines have one or two earrings in the ears; in some cases is seen a lotus-rosette on the either side of the ear apex. Three leaves with vertical linear incision adorn the hair and probably served as fasteners. The neck is adorned by bands of ring-punches, which almost stand for pearl necklaces. The necklace hangs up to the upper level of the breasts and is adorned by three horizontal leaves shown in relief and bearing vertical lines as marks of ripples on the original ornaments; the leaves alternate with circlets. The necklace designs often differ. Some of them have a central tassel hanging between the breasts (MM 646); others have a punched necklace and applied collar (MM 1705). On some others pearl necklace runs along the two shoulders, shown by punched circlets. These figurines have prominent breasts, sometimes separated and worked from the material of the torso, slender waist with broader hip, deep navel, applied girdle with vertical linear legs like tapering stumps and arms tapering downwards. The foliage ornamentation, earrings, necklaces, strands of hair are all affixed to the clay body¹ (*Figs. 5-10*).

This type of figurines are conspicuously known at Mathura in large numbers, but are quite unknown at other sites. Many figurines of this type are displayed in Mathura Museum and V. S. Agrawala has illustrated two busts and three almost complete figurines.² Coomaraswamy has also illustrated two specimens,³ but both differ from those of Agrawala's in certain important respects. One of them has no head

1. *Ibid.*, p. 16, figs. 6-8.

2. *Ibid.*, figs. 4-5 and 6-8 respectively.

3. A. K. Coomaraswamy, "Archaic Indian Terracottas," *Jpak*, pl. II, figs. II.13.

ornamentation, but on the other hand it has an applied necklace along the shoulders with punched or incised circlets, instead of a pearl necklace. The other has punched circlets all along its body, which might be the representation of drapery.

A female torso most probably represents another variety of this type of figurines though it is not unlikely that it may belong to the variety which had moulded head and is described in the subsequent chapter. It has a very broad hip with a thick girdle made of square stamps containing rows of dots and lines, with another row of stamps below it. Ornamented tassels are hanging on the thighs. A necklace with an oval pendant and two other objects on its either side hang between the breasts. The hands are on the hip, but the right hand is completely missing (MM 3360) (Fig. 11).

Ahichchhatra. The archaic figurines found at Ahichchhatra are more or less of the first type of Mathura figurines and some of them have already been referred to above. The others also are variations of Mathura specimens. One of them (8884) has an animal-like feature and is made out of a single lump of clay. In it the hair is indicated by applique parallel strands descending on the back up to armpits. An applied collar is fixed round the neck. another pendant necklace passes over the shoulder and above the breasts, made by the roll of clay and marked by a series of pin-heads, produced by affixing most probably *bajra* seeds. The breasts are also applied. The arms extend horizontally from the shoulders but were bent abruptly from the elbow. The figure was found in the excavation in the stratum of 300-200 B. C. and is fragmentary.¹

Two torsos and a hip fragment were also found in these excavations (Nos. 8842, 6196, 3542 respectively). The first one has the head and portions below the girdle missing. It

1. *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 107, fig. 1.

has an applied collar and two lines of pin-head marks. A pendant necklace passes round the breasts with a vertical string between them; the arms project straight from the shoulders. It was found in the stratum of 200-100 B. C.¹ The hip fragment shows broad hips and applique-incised girdle. It has the navel marked by a big sunken six-armed rosette. It was found in a later filling, therefore no stratigraphical date could be assigned to it² (*Fig. 12*). The third figurine is headless with tapering arms extending straight from the bust and ending abruptly without details. It has low breasts worked out from the material of the torso, slender waist and broad hips; girdle indicated by an applied roll of clay with a row of pin-heads; navel not indicated; legs are like short tapering stumps without details of feet. This may be dated to 100 B. C.-100 A.D.³

Another figurine, found from a pit and thus unassignable to any period (No. 3180), has the headdress of rosette type, and the applique collar; a pearl necklace runs along the shoulders and a hanging string of pearls is in between the breasts. The girdle is also of pearls. The breasts are applied, the arms straight and the legs are broad, stumpy and disproportionately short.⁴

Bangarh. The excavations at Bangarh have yielded a few archaic torsos. These fragmentary figurines have girdles of chevron designs, sometimes of one strand and sometimes of two. One specimen shows a row of circular designs stamped below the girdle. The navel is prominently shown and the waist slim⁵ (*Figs. 13-14*). These figurines were found from the level which may be dated to late Śuṅga or early Kushāṇa period.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 108, fig. 4.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 108, fig. 6.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 108, fig. 8.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-9, fig. 9.

5. K. G. Goswami, *Excavation at Bangarh*, p. 23, pl. xxv, figs. 3, 5.

Lauria Nandangarh. In the excavations at Lauria Nandangarh several types of primitive figurines were found. One of them is shaped like star. The arms are shown by small horizontal projections. The legs are woven together though stretched apart by means of a sheet of clay, which is incised and suggests that it meant for dhoti (*Fig. 15*). Another figurine has short tapering arms and long tapering legs. It has an applied navel (*Fig. 16*). A female figurine has disproportionate dwarfish legs. Her right arm is placed over the chest horizontally and the left hand is hanging down. She has an applied collar and girdle of rosettes. It is headless (*Fig. 17*). Another figurine of the same type has animal-like face with long nose and long dangling ears hanging up to the neck. The right hand is placed over the belly (*Fig. 18*). A torso has an applied band of clay, punched with rings, and a necklace falling between the breasts. The breasts are developed and nipples marked by punched circlets. The navel is indicated by a lenticular deep incision (*Fig. 19*). A few more varieties may be distinguished among the figurines found at Lauria Nandangarh, but they more or less belong to one of the above types.

Ghosi. A few hand-modelled clay figurines were found at Ghosi (District Azamgarh, U. P.) with the head of bird-like appearance. Their necks have punched rings for necklace. Below the neck are extended arms, the left shown tapering and the right turned backward and touching the back. Roughly separated are the short legs. Details of sex and ornaments are quite absent. Its feminine character is pronounced and made distinct by the short pig-tail hair protruding on the back of the head (Luck. Mus. G 349).¹ The Indian Museum has got a number of unpublished figurines from this place. Of them, a few represent another type of primitive female

1. V. S. Agrawala "Terracottas from Ghosi," *J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. X, p. 62, fig. 3.

figurines. They have child either on the right shoulder (*Fig. 20*) or in the left arm (*Fig. 21*). The faces of these figurines are flat with fan-like ears, and long nose rises up from the forehead. The eyes are long and the pupils are indicated by a punch. The mouth is shown open in rectangular form. The navel is deep. These figurines have collars of various designs (*Figs. 22-23*).

Being surface finds no date can be assigned to these types; but the composition of the clay of which these figurines are made, is the same as that of the so-called Kushāṇa type big heads with tenons. The two types were found together.¹ The Ahichchhatra excavation suggests a post-Gupta date to the so-called Kushāṇa type of figurines.² So, these may also be post-Gupta.

Thus the primitive figurines are known in the Gangetic valley from 300 B. C. to 100 A. D. positively and in all probability they continued even in the Gupta period, as is evidenced from a solitary specimen from Basarh and the one from Ahichchhatra (No. 1347),³ and even after that period, as has been just pointed out above. These figurines in all likelihood are female representations, though often the sex-indications are not shown. In this connection, it is noteworthy that these figurines are undraped; only two instances are known from Mathura where they have on their body punched circles which may indicate drapery, but it is by no means certain. Further, in spite of the naked body, the mount of Venus is never indicated, which is found so conspicuous in the figurines from the Indus valley and other pre-historic sites of the world. This feature alone makes these figurines distinct from them.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

2. *Ancient India*, No. 4, pp. 155ff.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 108, fig. 7.

Chapter IV

MODELLED FIGURINES WITH MOULDED FACE

Some clay figurines have the bust or the body modelled by hand excepting the face which is turned out of the mould, and in some cases the affixed ornaments are also stamped with moulds. The figurines of this technique are known mainly from four sites—Mathura, Buxar, Pataliputra and Bangarh (Bengal). Although the products of a common technique, the figurines are marked by local features and style peculiar to each site.

Mathura. The figurines from Mathura of this type, viz., hand-modelled with moulded face, show similarity in style of applique ornamentation and hair-dressing with the archaic grey figurines from the same site, discussed in the preceding chapter. They are distinct only in the matter of their moulded face. It may be suggested that the combined style of using moulds along with hand-modelling should have followed the original technique of making clay figurines entirely with hand but this is subject to confirmation by controlled archaeological evidence from ancient sites, which is hitherto wanting.

These figurines have two types of faces. One is oval and has strange loveliness. This facial expression is unrelated to any known sculptures. The other facial expression is broad and round. This type is very near to the reliefs at Bhaja, Bharhut and Mathura. These figurines though flattened from front to back were intended to be looked at only frontally. The figurines are produced completely in the round and are not restricted to relief work only. No part of the face or body is separately made or affixed; hair is parted over the brows and hangs in heavy braids behind as in later art as far as Amaravati; the eyes are oval and the pupils are indicated; the breasts and hips are enormously develop-

ed, the navel is large and conspicuous; heavy large ear-rings are worn; also a girdle, bracelets and anklets, and sometimes torques and necklaces also.

Those figurines of the oval face type which are preserved with complete or nearly complete bodies, have pointed arms (without indication of hands) inclined downwards, but not touching the hips. The legs also taper but they are completely separated and there is no suggestion of feet.¹

Most of them are shorn of the head-dress (*Figs. 24-27*); but in a few of them it appears. The head-dress consisted of three or four rosettes;² two of the rosettes were over the ears and one in the centre over the head (*Figs. 28-31*). A few figurines had a band of three leaves with vertical linear incision fastened over the head. A number of the figurines have wig-like head-dress, which covers both sides and is stamped with rosettes. Each vertical band has five to seven rosettes in a row; but some bands have double rows of rosettes (*Figs. 32-35*). Lotus designs are also attached to some of these head-dresses. Another type of head-dress had two high smooth horn-like voluted ends. In some cases of this bicornet type of head-dress, rosettes are also attached (*Fig. 36*).

Some of the figurines with round face have the head-dress of four rosettes (*Fig. 37*); but mostly they have the hair done into lateral masses and fastened with strings of pearls. In some cases a central projection is also found in the form of a top-knot stamped with rosette or some other symbol (*Fig. 38-40*). These figurines are related to the early sculptures, such as Śuṅga heads from Mathura and the railing medallions of Bharhut.

A further advanced step in the technique of this type of figurines at Mathura is seen in a few specimens where the

1. *IPEK*, pl. I, fig. 5.

2. *Ibid.*

head as well as its entire background, stamped with floral patterns inclusive of even ear-rings, are pressed out from a mould and are affixed with modelled body. The arms in such figurines are natural. This type is rare. Only one specimen from Mathura (*Fig. 41*) and another from Ahichchhatra¹ are known.

Generally these figurines are undraped and standing, but a few specimens are tri-legged; the third leg is projecting as the tail and the figurine rendered in a pose similar of being seated on chair. A few figurines of this type are draped and seem to wear a skirt covering the whole body up to the knees. Only three such specimens are known, one each in the Mathura Museum (*Fig. 42*), Bharat Kala Bhavan (*Fig. 43*) and the National Museum (*Fig. 44*) but all of them are still unpublished.

The dating of these figurines has been suggested by Col. Gordon. He has pointed out that this type can be paralleled at a number of sites. He writes, 'At Mathura itself definitely nude figures sculptured in stone with similar ornaments appear as late as the Kushan railing pillars from Bhutesvara. The example given by Miss Kramrisch in Pl. VI, fig. 28 of her *Indian Sculpture* is proof of this. The mode of parallel plaits may be seen in a multitude of sculptures from the bracket figures at Sanchi to the late figures at Amaravati where this style of hair-dressing is particularly noticeable.' He has further pointed out to the style of ear-ornament on some of these figurines consisting of an object flat on one side and rounded on the other, and says that 'this style of ear-ornament is present in two figures, one of which is of similar applied decoration technique found at Bhir Mound, Taxila. Another of a woman carrying a child, found in the fields near Mohra Moradu, Taxila, has the same ear-ornament.'² He is of opinion that these two figurines

1. *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 109, fig. 10.

2. D. H. Gordon, "Early Indian Terracottas", *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. XI, p. 153.

cannot be dated earlier than 160 B. C.¹ It seems, therefore, reasonable to believe that these figurines from Mathura are approximately of the same period.

All these figurines are female. But a few male figurines are also known from Mathura; they are, however, rare. Their body is modelled with the crudeness of the primitive figurines but the face is moulded. The head-gear in them is also moulded along with the face. Complete figurines showing the body are only few; mostly the heads are known. They show the men wearing beard which is indicated by indentation marks on the chin. The head-dress of these figurines is often bicornet. Agrawala thinks that the facial features of these figurines present foreign affinities and they probably represent the heads of Iranian people.²

Buxar. No specimen of the modelled type of archaic figurines have been found at Buxar preceding the regular moulded ones like those at Mathura. Here we find a new type of figurines having their heads made of a round or somewhat oval lump of clay with incised eyes, a cut mouth and pointed nose with raised ridge. Instead of any indication for head-dress, they have three holes on the head placed in a row (*Fig 45*). These figurines are in all probability modelled, but do not seem primitive in their technique or appearance. They are known in various sizes. A few such heads have also been found at other sites like Kausāmbī and Rajghat, where they appear to have been imported.

In all probability, these figurines developed later in two distinct types. In one, the face mould was used on a thick clay plaque and the ear-ornaments were made by stamping circular designs on the plaque at their proper place (*Fig. 46*). They are decorated with several rows of pearls on the head (*Patna Mus. 6689*)³. The other type of figurines had a

1. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

2. V. S. Agrawala, "Mathura Terracottas", p. VI, figs. 17-21.

3. *Terracotta Figurines in Patna Museum*, pl. Buxar 16.

30 MODELLLED FIGURINES WITH MOULDED FACE

modelled body and face moulded on a round lump of clay with applied ornaments and head-dress. These figurines show the decoration of the head-dress and ornaments by stamping floral or petal designs. This type of figurines are far more common from this site and are mostly detached heads.

The faces are no doubt moulded but sometimes they give an illusion of being modelled; for example Kramrisch takes them to be modelled.¹ These figurines have exaggerated ear-lobes applied on either side of the moulded face with small ear-rings, stamped with floral or leaf design. They wear applied torque stamped with a lotus in the centre or with some linear design. The only specimen with complete body shows prominent breasts, without nipples, worked out of the material of the torso; either arms taper down and the legs are closed together with narrow space in between them (Patna Mus. 6300) (*Fig. 47*).²

These figurines have their hair arranged in a variety of styles. The forehead is encircled by a wreath of flowers or a pearl-string or tiara. The head-dresses are varied and elaborate, the principal types being the following :—

(a) A simple knot of hair over the head (Patna Mus. 6612)³ (*Fig. 48*).

(b) The simplest head-dress is made of a triangular straw hat-like cap extending on the two sides much in excess of the size of the head. It is ornamented with several parallel rows of floral designs. The lowest band consists of a row of vertical tassels (Patna Mus. 6300)⁴ (*Fig. 47*).

(c) A triangular head-dress made of three pieces of rolls covered with check designs, two longer pieces placed on either side of the head and the small one in the centre

1. Kramrisch, in *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VII, p. 108.

2. P. L. Gupta (ed.), *Patna Museum Catalogue Of Antiquities*, pl. XLVI.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 263.

4. *Ibid.*, pl. XLVI.

joining the two. This type of head-dress is probably a turban made of a checkered cloth (Patna Mus. 6605)¹ (Fig. 49).

(d) A turban with a round knob on the top facing. This type of head-dress is by far the most common on these figurines (Patna Mus. 6584)² (Fig. 50).

(e) Uni-cornet head-dress, with a long horn-like projection on the left. This type of head-dress has a big volute and over it a smaller one, both fastened with a long stripe. On the right side over the head is a rosette. A solitary figurine with this type of head-dress is in the Patna Museum from Kauśāmbī, but by its features it is foreign to that place and is akin to the Buxar figurines (Patna Mus. 7714)³ (Fig. 51).

Only heads are mostly found of these figurines. A few complete figurines show that they are sitting figures, as if seated on chair; but without chair. This has been made possible by adding a third leg at the back. The entire body portion is modelled. Formerly it was considered that they all represent women; but now the complete ones disclose that both male and female were made of this type. While the female torso figurines show prominent breasts, the male ones are distinguished by their sex-organ.⁴ In some recent finds two figurines, one male and the other female have been found together.⁵ The complete figurines disclose that the male figures exclusively used head-dress of type (d) described above, while the females dressed their heads variously.

Pataliputra. Modelled figurines with moulded face are known from Bulandibagh and Kumrahar excavations and the trench diggings in Patna town or ancient Pataliputra. But

1. *Ibid.*, p. 282, pl. XLV.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 281, pl. XLV.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 294, pl. L.

4. In Niramaya Samgrahalaya (a private museum), at Buxar.

5. Information from Shri Sita Ram Upadhyaya of Buxar.

they are few in number and to be taken as individual specimens rather than types. These specimens are known exclusively from this place and have not been found outside Paṭaliputra.

The simplest figurines of Patna are the two heads of 'Laughing Boy' and 'Smiling Girl'. The Smiling Girl has a round face and bicornet head-dress. The hair is marked on the high forehead coming forth from underneath the rim of the head-dress. The lateral horns rise from the broad and high curves of the dressed hair and are covered with affixed strands of hair. There are holes on the top of the draped prominences. The ears are rather unsuccessfully drawn out. At the back flat pieces of cloth hang down and are affixed in the middle. Traces of an applied torque are noticeable on the neck (Patna Mus. 4178) (*Fig. 52*). The head of the Laughing Boy has bicornet head-dress of which one side on the right is higher and the other on the left flat. It is made of a cloth which is fastened at the back. The two ends of the cloth or ribbon are affixed at the back. The hem of the cloth shows its wavy edge around the back of the head (Patna Mus. 4226) (*Fig 53*). These heads are no doubt very lovely and graceful.

Another head with full cheeks, snub nose and gross smile was found in digging at Patna for sewerage-laying. The hair is dressed in trefoil, having a lotus flower with a leaf and a stalk fastened on either side (Patna Mus. 9471).¹ Another head from Bulandibagh has got an elaborate head-dress of uni-cornet type and is interesting for its mode of fashioning the head-dress (Patna Mus. 4420).²

By far the most important is the standing female figurine made of fine, hard baked clay of grey buff colour. It is modelled by hand except for the face which is moulded. Most of its parts like base plate, costume, jewellery, head-dress are separately affixed—an unknown type of work in this

1. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

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or in any other technique. The open eyes and long-face with animated features are delicately modelled. The figurine has an exceedingly high forehead and the head is surmounted by a high headgear, affixed to which is on either side a hanging horn-like thing with pointed shape and big rosettes in a line above, a bigger one in the centre and two smaller ones on sides. Between the rosettes are clusters of lotus stalks; in the right ear is a cylindrical plug and in the left a round plaque. The breasts are covered with a cloth. The figurine wears a pleated skirt arranged on the two sides of the legs like the spread-out wings of a butterfly (Patna Mus. 4177) (Fig. 54).¹

There is another standing female figurine that shows detailed modelling. It is tall and slender in body. She holds in her upraised right hand a heavy ear-plug shaped like a potter's dabber and the left arm raised near the breast with somewhat similar object. The body above the hip is bare. The face is short, the head is high, flattened and broad. The line of the frontal hair is recessed in the middle and the hair covers the head like a flat veil. She is wearing a torque round the neck and wristlets in the hands. She wears *dhoti* clinging with a girdle on it. The ends are gathered in folds at the back and are shown fluttering on her right side* (Patna Mus. 8510). This arrangement of *dhoti* is noticed on several other specimens from this site and appears to be a local fashion.

A third figurine, tall in stature, also deserves our attention. The left arm is broken but was probably placed on the hip (*kati-vinyasta*) and the right hand was hanging by the side but flexed at the elbow. It wears a simple torque made of rectangular plaques. The head-dress consists of a piece of cloth with a rolled rim against the forehead. The loop ends of the cloth are tied at the back much in the same fashion as

1. *Ibid.*, pl. XLJ.

2. *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIX.

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the kerchief on the heads of nurses in modern times. She is wearing a skirt which is shown fluttering on the two sides of the legs (Patna Mus. 8508)¹ (Fig. 55).

Besides these female figurines, some figurines with a male head placed over a round pot, giving the shape of a highly pot-bellied sitting or squatting figure (Patna Museum 9271)² are known from this site. The heads of these figurines are mostly moulded, but in one or two cases they are executed in crude fashion (Figs. 59-60).³

Most of these figurines were found from the excavations in the dark-blue soil enveloping the ancient wooden rampart of Pataliputra and their 'extreme antiquity is manifested'.⁴ Therefore Coomaraswamy believes that there is no reason to regard them as later than Maurya or Pre-Maurya.⁵

Bangarh. In the excavations at Bangarh, a few figurines of archaic type with moulded face have been found. They are quite different from the figurines of other sites. They are in squatting posture, wearing an undulated girdle with depressions made by finger. The navel is indicated by a conspicuous depression. The body appears like the trunk of a tree with prominent full-developed breasts bearing holes for nipples. They have a torque of chevron design. The left hand is placed on the thigh. The moulded face is broad with a long nose and lenticular eyes incised with pupils, indicated by holes. The eye-brows are shown in relief extending the ridge of the nose to upper tips of the ears. Just above the eye-brows with little space for the forehead is a band of chevron design over which is a bicornet turban (Figs. 56-58). These figurines have been found in the stratum of late Kushāṇa and Gupta periods.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 202.

2. *Terracotta figurines in Patna Museum*, Plate, Bulandibagh 5.

3. *Ibid.*, Plate Patna 14.

4. *ASI, AR.* 1915-6 pt. I, pp. 14, 17-18, pt. II, p. 27.

5. Coomaraswamy, in *Ipek*, p. 70.

Chapter V

THE MOULDED PLAQUES

Gradually a new method of making clay figurines by moulds was evolved in the Śuṅga period and it continued in the Kushāṇa and Gupta periods. With this method the figurines were produced as plaques pressed out from the moulds and needed no modelling by hand as was done in the preceding epochs. Now the figure is seen in relief on its front side, and the back is concave. These plaques are either circular or rectangular in form, the latter being much more common. They are thick or thin according to the quantity of clay used in moulding. The height of the relief projects against the background of the plaque and depends upon the depth engraved in the mould.

Female Figurines

Sunga Period. The most characteristic type of plaques in the Śuṅga period show charming female figures and scenes from daily life. The females are usually seen standing in graceful poses. Some of them are shown in *Tribhanga* attitude. Sometimes the plaques have a border over the entire background. The arms of the figurines are either suspended along the body (*lata-hasta* pose) or placed akimbo (*kati-vinyasta*). In a plaque from Kausambi a woman is shown leaning on her hand.

Women wear bracelets and earrings of three types—cylindrical, discular and spiral, which are often seen suspended from the ear-lobes. The hair shows different styles of coiffure and is mostly found covered with some ornament or jewel. Sometimes the head-dress consists of two lateral projections having a third one in the middle, with voluted ends. At times the hair is tied into turban-like rolls of cloth, each secured with plain or ornamented fillets, chain of beads and pearls. A girdle is seen as the constant feature which we have also noted above in case of most of the archaic figurines.

The figurines are generally draped in tunic and dhoti. Despite the clothing, in some cases particular care is taken, as is the case in many of the Śuṅga and early Kushāṇa stone sculptures, to show the sex details very clearly. Probably this was a device with the artists to show transparent drapery. Sometimes the nudity is over emphasised.

An outstanding plaque of the Śuṅga period is a standing female (*Fig. 61*) which is now in the Ashmolean Museum Oxford.¹ E.H. Johnston has described it in detail as follows:—
 “The background against which the figure is set is decorated with numerous twelve-pointed and six-pointed rosettes, made with two stamps and representing either stars or flowers. The headdress is elaborate; the hair itself seems to be enclosed in a close-fitting bonnet (or fillet?), bordered with four rows of beads and terminating in two flower tassels, the frontal hair being just visible. There is an arched line across the forehead below the hair, whose significance is not clear to me, and below this are traces of a ‘tilaka’ mark in the usual place above the bridge of the nose. On each side of the bonnet are two turban-like rolls of cloth, each bound with a belt and highly ornate. The left hand one, which is the larger in accordance with the usual practice of this class of figure, is made up of five vertical strips with dependent tassels or strings of beads at regular intervals, while the right hand one appears to be in a single piece, embellished with six rows of a flower ornament, between which are strings of beads. Stuck into the latter are five emblems, of the kind which indicate power or fortune. The lowest one is an ‘cakra’, the middle one axe. The two on each side of the latter are of the ‘triśūla’ shape, the lower one being surmounted with a crown and the upper by a triangular pointed piece; possibly they are two shapes of vajra. The top emblem appears to be flag or fan. Each of the five has a string of six beads hanging from the top. Between the masses of the turban rises a crown with five rows of

1. Formerly in the Indian Institute, Oxford.

star-shaped ornament, presumably a jewelled cap, containing the hair. The ears have two large circular highly decorated rolls, that in the right being shown in side view and the other one frontally; from each hang a number of long lassels or strings of beads. Round the neck is a heavy necklace."

The representation of the dress is 'ambiguous and capable of two interpretations'. Either 'it consists of a sleeveless tunic, caught in at the waist by a girdle and extending to the knee with a skirt underneath which reaches nearly to the ankles', or 'a single garment with flounces'. 'At the bottom of the tunic (or flounces) are two series of strings of beads ending in tassels;... Above the upper series of these strings are four little figures, two on each thigh, made from the same mould. The bodies are paunchy and covered with tiny dots; the attitude is squatting with the elbows resting on the knees and the hands raised to the head, on which is a turban or conical headdress.'¹

"A sash passes over the right shoulder and round the hip like a bandolier, consisting of a broad ribbon and four amulets. The latter represent two fish, a bird with the head broken (perhaps a parrot), a sleeping doe and a *makara*. A number of strings of beads are appended to the ribbon and the amulets. One or more scarves are worn, passing over the right and left upper arms and the left shoulder and breast, and terminating on a level with the knees. On each wrist are four heavy bracelets but armlets are conspicuously absent."²

1. Dr. Moti Chandra identifies the garment as a sleeveless *kanchuka*, reaching up to the knee and belted at the waist. It has a peculiarity that the right shoulder is bare and the edge of the *kanchuka* passes over the centre of the left breast. (This has also been noticed by Dr. Johnston). It has a bordered round collar below the neck. The two series of strings of beads ending in tassels, which have been identified by Dr. Johnston as ending at the bottom of the tunic or flounces, have been identified by Dr. Moti Chandra as the part of the girdle. (*Prachina Bharatiya Vesa Bhusha*, p. 83).

2. E. H. Johnston, "A Terracotta figure at Oxford," *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. X, pp. 95-98.

The provenance of this figurine does not seem to be recorded with certainty.¹ On the basis of its style however it appears to be related to the female figurines of Kausambi, now deposited in the Allahabad Museum² and the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi. Many a figurine on plaques found at Kausambi show the following features:—headdress with rolls, one ear-ring shown frontally and the other in side view, the five sacred symbols above the head, use of three or four bracelets, the arched line above the forehead and the stamped rosettes in the background.³ These features present in the Oxford figurine indicate its stylistic affiliation to the Kau-

1. The records in the Indian Institute, Oxford, do not have the provenance of this figurine. But in the *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1888) is published a note by one Gurudasa Bysack (p. 133) along with a photograph of a terracotta figurine (pl. III) which is exactly similar to this figurine and was found by him in the beds of river Rupanarayan at Tamluk. The authorities of the Asiatic Society of Bengal have recently claimed that this figurine is the same, which is now in Oxford. The figurine was sent by the finder to the Society and from the Society, it is alleged that it somehow disappeared and reached Oxford. The photograph given in the *Proceedings* shows the same four breaks that are found in the Oxford figurine. One break comes at the waist, and each leg has broken off separately, the lower portion consists of both feet and ankles and the lower part of right leg is missing. Thus the identity of the two is quite possible and leaves little doubt that the figurine might have come from Tamluk. A fragment of the same type of figurine (only a portion of the head) is in Asutosh Museum and is said to have come from Tamluk. Still it is doubtful if it was the local art of Tamluk or its vicinity. Most likely they were imports to that place, which was a very important port in ancient India. In absence of any precise information Col. Gordon had remarked that it might have come to light anywhere between Taxila and Banaras (Early Indian Terracotta, *J. I. S. O. A.*, XI, p. 192); but Dr. Johnston was almost sure that it originated from Kausambi (*J. I. S. O. A.* vol. X, p. 94-102). See also S. K. Saraswati, *A Survey of Indian Sculpture* (Calcutta, 1957), p. 117.
2. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, pl. VC; XIVA, 1.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

sambi females. Some of these characteristics or peculiarities are also found in the figurines from Rajghat (Fig. 62), Mathura (Fig. 63-64), Ahichchhatra¹ (Fig. 65), Champa (Bhagalpur),² Chandraketurah³ and Bangarh.⁴ But taken as a whole the excellent workmanship, fine finish and elaborate ornamentation connect the specimen with the familiar style of Kauśambi. The type had spread over many important clay-figure manufacturing centres of the Gangetic valley.

The number of sacred symbols in the head-dress in the Oxford and Rajghat figurines is five, whereas in the Ahichchhatra and Mathura figurines the symbols are three, four or five inserted on left side of the head-dress.

It has to be recognised that the Oxford figurine belongs, indeed, to a group that was distinguished by several other features like the fringed drapery, pendent Yaksha figures in front. These peculiarities are noticed in a number of fragmentary figurines in the Mathura Museum (MM 3328; MM 2301). They are also noticed on a figurine from Bhita which is conceived in a slightly different posture (IM K233/7503) (Fig. 66).

Another type of female figurines have a rich headdress derived essentially from the trefoil form of the headdress seen on the preceding type having the central flowery boss with two streaming bands. But instead of symbols, the outer framing of the headdress is achieved by the rich foliage of a palm tree. A figurine from Ahichchhatra¹ (Fig. 67) represents this type. A simple trefoil headdress with two lateral masses and a central projection is seen on some other figurines. Two loose

1. *Ancient India*, No. 4 pl. XXXIII, fig. 23-25.

2. Unpublished. Found in excavations by Patna Uni. in 1970.

3. Unpublished. Found in excavations conducted by Calcutta Uni. Now in Asutosh Mus.

4. K. G. Goswami, *Excavations at Bangarh*, pl. XXI B, fig. 1, 5.

5. V. S. Agrawala, "Ahichchhatra Terracotta," fig. 27.

bands fall on the sides (MM 2245 MM 2677) (*Figs. 68-9*). Some figurines have unicornet headdress with projection on the left (MM 2722; MM 2246) (*Figs. 70-1*).

Kushana Period. This popularity of female figurines enriched with such detailed ornamentation seems to have continued in the early Kushāṇa age (MM 2654) (*Fig. 72*), but in the later part of this epoch they are rarely noticed. The most remarkable female figurines of this age are the Śalabhāñjikās. They have been executed in clay with such tenderness that they appear to be miniature replicas to the minutest detail of the lithic representations of the same theme known from various sites (MM 3032; MM 5712; MM 3035; MM 1628) (*Figs. 73-76*).

Gupta Period. With the advent of the Gupta period, the feminine life with ornate make-up ceases to be represented in the clay art. We now find female figurines with minimum ornamentation but relying more on natural charm of the body. Unfortunately not a single complete figurine of this period has yet been recovered. Either heads or busts are found at various sites in the Gangetic valley. They show full rounded breasts, pressing each other, without any intervening space. This trait is often remarked of the femininity in the *Kāvya* literature of the period.¹ Their fondness for elegant simplicity is compensated by the extreme loveliness of their hair styles. V. S. Agrawala has described the main styles of the coiffure based on his studies of the Rajghat² and Ahichchhatra figurines.³

The most common way of doing a women's coiffure was the trefoil style with the hair arranged in two side masses with a central top-knot. They had a number of ways of the hair-dress which varied with the arrangement of the central

1. *Kumarasambhava* I. 40; cf. *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 137.

2. V. S. Agrawala, *Terracottas from Rajghat*, *J.I.O.A.*, IX, p. 7-11.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 138-9.

or the side masses of the hair. The most favourite with the women was the *Alakavali* having twisted spiral curls. Sometimes they wear *Chhatrakara* style having a middle parting or *simanta*. In this style the hair is arranged parasol-like with locks above and on the sides, marked by a central parting (*simanta* or *kesavithi*). In some cases the lateral masses were rendered like a honey-comb of cellular structure.¹ Charming specimens of this form have been found at Rajghat and Bhita (*Figs. 77-82*). Sometimes the central parting of the hair is adorned with a jewel. This jewel adoration (*chatula*) has many ways and may thus form many sub-varieties of the type.² Sometimes the combed space above the forehead is beautified by an ornament representing a bee or *bhramara* with outspread wings.³ Some figurines show the heads covered with a veil (*odhni* or *avagunthana*).⁴

But we have some female figurines which do not display such fashionable hair styles. They are shown in simple posture with the left hand akimbo (*vamaponi-kativin-yasta*) and the right hand hanging by the side (*lata-hasta*) holding a round object which may be identified as *bija-puraka* (*Citrus Medica*). They are distinguished by a plain petticoat without folds on the lower portion and a scarf (*uttarasanga*) passing over the breast and on the left shoulder. (*Figs. 83-4*). This agrees with I-Tsing's account of the Buddhist nuns.⁵ Most likely these figurines represent them.

Some of the female figurines of this period, known from Ahichchhatra, are nude, having dishevelled hair and a bent body in disconsolate posture, or simply standing with the right hand drawn parallel to the body and the left akimbo.⁶ Nudity is contrary to the convention of Gupta art, but Dr.

1. V. S. Agrawala, in *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 143, figs. 155-156.

2. *Ibid.* p. 144, figs. 164-67.

3. *Ibid.* p. 144, figs. 168-69.

4. *Ibid.* p. 145, figs. 170-74.

5. *Ibid.* p. 150, figs. 195-201.

6. *Ibid.*, No. 4, figs. 202-207.

Agrawala has explained its presence in the context of distinct iconographic formula of the goddess Kojavi.¹

Suka-Krida, or the playing with the birds is mentioned as one of the important pastimes of women amongst the sixty-four Kalās of the time.² Sanskrit literature contains numerous references to various sports with birds. The female parrot (*sarika*) is mentioned by Kālidāsa in the *Meghaduta* as engaging the attention of the lonely Yakshīñī. Playing with the birds seems to have been a favourite pastime with ladies, and there are several sculptured representations of this scene on the Kushāṇa railing pillars from Mathura.³

Probably this subject was well known in Śūṅga clay art (Fig. 85) but became much popular during Kushāṇa and Gupta periods. In some clay plaque representations the bird is either held in the hand or perched on the shoulder (Figs. 85-91). At times the bird is seen sitting on the girdle (Fig. 87). Often women are seen feeding parrots perched on their hand. A figurine in the Mathura Museum, brought from the Vihar Mound in Farukhabad district, shows a woman feeding the parrot with pomegranate fruit (MM 1199) (Fig. 89).⁴ A bunch of mangoes is being offered to the bird in a plaque from Kausambi⁵. A woman feeding a parrot with a fruit is also seen on a plaque from Ahichchhatra.⁶

A beautiful representation of *Sukakrida* is found on a clay bust from Kausambi, wherein the parrot on the right hand of the lady is touching her lips, evidently mistaking the teeth for pomegranate seeds.⁷ In another torso from the

1. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

2. Vatsyayana's *Kamasutra*, Chap. III.

3. Agrawala, *Mathura Museum Hand Book*, fig. 9.

4. Agrawala, *Mathura Terracottas*, p. 30, fig. 30.

5. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 36, pl. XVA.

6. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, fig. 44.

7. Kala *op. cit.*, p. 37.

same site, the bird is seen pecking at the pearls of her necklace.¹ A similar subject is also depicted on a railing pillar at Mathura. It shows a lady standing after bath pressing out of her tresses drops of water which a swan is shown receiving in its bill mistaking them for rain drops. Most likely this theme is depicted in a fragmentary plaque in Mathura Museum (MM 3402) (Fig. 90). It has a swan to her right. All these figurines are either of Kushāṇa period or of Gupta period.

The only known specimens of the early, i. e. Śuṅga period are a plaque from Mathura (Fig. 85) and two from Bangarh in Bengal. One of the two specimens from the latter site, is a fragmentary mould depicting a female figure standing facing against the background of rosettes with a garland in her right hand and a crane to her left with its open bill raised upward.² It may be swallowing the wrung drops of water from the hair of the lady. The other specimen from Bangarh is also interesting. It shows the female figure with a bird (parrot) in her right upraised hand and (probably) a *hamsa* on the right and a deer on the left of her legs.³

Lila-Kamala (Woman with lotus)

Sanskrit literature has got numerous references to the woman holding lotus and knows it as *lila-kamala* (lotus sport). This literary motif is shown in a number of clay figurines, and has often been mistaken as Lakshmi with lotus as her attribute. Col. Gordon has illustrated a fragmentary plaque from Mathura wherein a woman wearing a turban is holding a bunch of flowers or lotuses in upraised right hand and left hand is hanging down.⁴ This he assigns to some time in the

1. *Ibid.*

2. K. G. Goswami, *Excavations at Bangarh*, p. 18, pl. xx, fig. 4.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 19, XIX A.

4. D. H. Gordon, *Early Indian Terracottas*, *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. XI, pl. XIV, 1.

first century B. C. A complete clay figurine of this type was discovered by Cunningham at Sankisa which is typically Śuṅga in style and dress. She holds a lotus flower by the stalk in her right hand, while her left hand rests on the hip.¹ The Mathura Museum has got a number of plaques of Śuṅga and Kushāṇa periods depicting this subject (MM 2720; MM 2834; MM 2597) (*Fig. 92*). At Ahichchhatra a fragmentary figure of this type was found in the stratum which may be dated in fourth century A. D., but stylistically the figurine appears earlier. Dr. Agrawala regards it as intrusive in the stratum.²

Woman doing Toilet

Make-up (*prasādhana*) is one of the very important items of the daily routine of the female life. The clay modellers also were alive to it and have depicted some toileting scenes on the plaques from Mathura. In a plaque of Śuṅga period, a lady is shown holding a mirror in her left hand and adjusting her earring with right hand (MM 2256) (*Fig. 93*). In another plaque of Kushāṇa period, a lady is shown seated on her settee in profile, holding a mirror in her right hand and adjusting the head-gear with left hand, probably engaged in her toilet (MM 2254)³ (*Fig. 94*).

Woman with a fan (*Vyajana-dharini*)

Female attendants formed a feature of palaces and courts in ancient India. They were also employed in rich homes. They served by holding mirrors, toilet boxes, fans, chauries etc., to their masters. They are represented well in numerous sculptures from many sites, but in terracotta art we only find women holding fan in the hand on the plaques of Śuṅga period from Mathura, Kausambi and Rajghat. These female attendants hold a circular palm-leaf fan in their right hand. The left hand supports the fold of her sari (MM 2638; MM

1. C. A. S. R., Vol. XI, p. 28, pl. IX, fig. 4.

2. *Ancient India*, No. 4, p. 116, fig. 39.

3. Agrawala, *Mathura Terracottas*, p. 31, fig. 34.

2595; MM 2859; (AM 173) (*Fig. 95*). In a Kausambi plaque the fan has the form of a small wheel.¹

Woman with attendant

In Kushāṇa period we find some plaques which represent a lady with an attendant. The attendant is either a female holding some object such as a mirror (*Fig. 96*), or a boy holding something like a bowl (*Figs. 97-98*), or a girlish figure with ill-developed female features (*Fig. 99*). The attendants are generally shown smaller in stature than that of the mistress or the royal lady. This type of plaques are confined to Mathura (MM 2273; MM 2637; MM 3114) (*Figs. 97-98*) and Ahichchhatra² (*Fig. 96*); and are not known either in the Śuṅga period or in the Gupta periods, but seem to be a peculiar feature of Kushāṇa art.

Male figurines

The male plaques of Śuṅga and Kushāṇa periods are extremely limited in number and known from Ahichchhatra only. The most remarkable male type of Śuṅga period holds a lute in the suspended right hand and has left hand on the hip. On the head is worn a turban with a protuberance on the left side, covering a mass of hair or resting on a globular core. Round the neck is some ornament. On the shoulder is a scarf covering the right arm with double plaited ends falling on the right side below the knee. The figure wears the *dhoti* with parallel oblique folds on the right leg and vertical folds on the left, the two ends of which form on the left thigh a bulbous tassel. Distinct marks of stippling on the bust and neck indicate gauze-like (*jaliha*) garment.³

Another type of male figurine is nude, wearing a necklace of two taurine-shaped beads and another pendent necklace on the chest. The man holds an indistinct object in right hand; left arm is akimbo. A richly decorated scarf covers shoulders

1. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 35.

2. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, fig. 41, p. 117.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 118, fig. 48.

and arms with ends falling on the sides of legs. He wears a triple-beaded girdle¹ (Fig. 101).

A Kushāṇa headless male figure holding some indistinct object in the left hand and right hand upraised is known from Baigram (Bengal) and is now in Asutosh Museum (Fig. 102).

In the Gupta period male figures are numerous and are found on most of the sites of the Gangetic valley; but just like the female figurines of this period, they are free from ornamentation and show a number of lovely hair styles (Figs. 103-108). The most favourite form of coiffure among them was the wig-like arrangement of the hair. The hair crowns the head as a semi-circular parasol with spiral locks arranged like ribs closed to each other (Figs. 105-107) all radiating from a top-knot. This was sometimes marked by a central parting. Sometimes they also have, like the women, their hair arranged in two side masses with or without parting *śimanta* backed by a crest (Fig. 104). All the male figurines of Gupta period are seen uniformly standing with left hand akimbo and right hand hanging down (Figs. 103, 104).

Mithuna or Dampati figurines

Man-and-woman (*mithuna* or *dampati*) motif is seen on a number of plaques found at Ahichchhatra,² Mathura,³ Bhita,⁴ Kauśāmbī⁵ and Rajghat (Banaras). Dr. Agrawala has pointed out that they seem to be related to the ideal 'man-and-woman' figurines represented at Sanchi as forming part of the repertoire of the idyllic land of Uttarakuru, where Mithuna pairs endowed with eternal youth and beauty are born from *kalpavriksha* and spend their lives in continuous pleasure.⁶

1. *Ibid.*, p. 118, fig. 49.

2. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, pp. 110-13.

3. Agrawala, *Mathura terracottas*, p. 31.

4. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, fig. 69.

5. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kauśāmbī*, pp. 27-28.

6. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, p. 109.

In the most expressive specimens of the Śuṅga period, the male figure holds a lute (Ahichchhatra fig. 12) or a flower (Ahichchhatra fig. 16) and the woman on the left embraces him with her right hand and has her left hand placed akimbo. The man is dressed and ornamented just in the same way as we have seen in the individual male figures dressed and ornamented above (Fig. 100). Similarly the woman is dressed and ornamented like individual woman of this period with the sacred symbols in the headgear (Figs. 109-110). This type of figurines have been found exclusively at Ahichchhatra and in numbers.¹ This seems to be a favourite local type of that place.

This was followed at Ahichchhatra with another type of the couple plaques, wherein the woman is to the right of the man. The plaques have decorative borders and background stamped with flowers, rosettes, spirals and lozenges, bisected into triangles. The edges of the plaques are straight and appear to have been made from rectangular moulds. The border of the earlier type has an irregular outline. The details of decoration are much simpler than in the previous ones. The drapery and ornaments and the headdress in the female figures and the conspicuous turban of the male figures, as also the facial types, are related to the known examples of the early sculptures. These couples appear in stronger amorous suggestions and belong to late Śuṅga and Kushāṇa periods.² They may be described as follows.

1. Man and woman with their left and right arms crossed at the back and hands placed on each other's shoulder. The right hand of the woman is placed on a triple-beaded girdle. Her plaited hair is covered by a bonnet decorated with rows of petals, a design found on numerous Bharhut figures of man and woman. She wears earrings in her ears, a flat triangular

1. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, figs. 11-18, pp. 109-110.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.

necklace of three strings, and a triple armlet on the right arm. The male figure wears a knotted turban covered with petalled decoration, a flat torque and necklace, a scarf passing across the body to the left side, a cloth with a front fold arranged between the legs, and a girdle knotted in a graceful loop in front like the cloth-girdle on Bharhut figures. The plaque has a thin lozenge border. It is dated about 100 A.D.¹ (*Fig. 118*).

2. Male and female standing in an amorous attitude, the male touching the breast of his partner. On her head is a bonnet consisting of pearl-strings covering the hair, which is gathered in a braid towards the right. Ornaments as in the preceding type. The woman is holding with her right hand the ends of a scarf tied loosely round her hips, as in some of the Bharhut figures. The male figure has a double knotted turban. The slight projecting base is decorated with four floral bosses and two spirals² (*Fig. 116*).

Mathura has also produced a number of Mithuna plaques. At least eleven specimens were noticed by me in Mathura Museum (MM 2713, 2373, 2087, 2634, 2921, 2294, 2714, 2257, 2250, 2474, 2349) and one in the Indian Museum (*Fig. 112*) (Photograph No. 1423). All of them except one (MM 2383) are unpublished. All of these figurines are in strong amorous poses, and belong to Śuṅga and Kushāṇa periods. A plaque of the Śuṅga period shows the couple in dancing pose with male to the right (MM 2713) (*Fig. 111*). In another plaque of this period woman is to right of the man both facing (MM 2383) (*Fig. 117*). Of the Kushāṇa plaques one (MM 2227) is finely executed and can well be compared with the lithic art of the period. Here the male is to the right of his partner and both have their right hands respectively on the shoulder of each other. The male is holding the hand of the woman on his shoulder. Another plaque of this period (*Fig. 114*)

1. *Ibid.*, fig. 20, p. 113.

2. *Ibid.*, fig. 22, pp. 113-14.

is interesting. It has the woman in *tribhanga* pose.

Kausāmbī has also yielded a number of plaques depicting couples. A fragmentary plaque represents the early type of couple known from Ahichchhatra (*Figs. 109-110*)¹. But by far the most important plaque from this site represents a couple sitting on a cushioned couch. The female sits on the lap of the male. She has thrown her left hand round the neck of her partner while with the right she holds one of her earrings. The male has a turban with a protuberance on the left side resting finally on a globular core.² This type is common at this site. A few other types of couple figurines are known from this site, and are described by Shri Kala under the title '*The dampati scenes*'.³ These latter types are in all probability of Kushāṇa period.

Couple plaques are extremely rare in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. Only a small plaque showing a man fondling a woman with his right hand on her chin is known from Ahichchhatra⁴ (*Fig. 119*). It was found in the stratum dated 750-850 A. D., but on the basis of its style Dr. Agrawala places it a little earlier in the Gupta period. The typical Gupta features are the honey-comb style of hair on the man's head, round earrings in the ears of them both, short striped loin-cloth worn by the male figure, *ekavali* pearl-necklace round the woman's neck, breasts touching each other, and a beaded border on the full margin of the plaque.⁵ A fragmentary plaque representing couple was found by Marshall in the excavations at Bhita and is assigned by him to Gupta period. It shows the couple standing facing. The right arm of the woman is around the neck of the man and left arm of the man is around the neck of the woman. The left arm of the woman is hanging down and the right arm of the man is on hip. The

1. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 28.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-9.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

4. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, fig. 253.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

drapery is uncertain. Hair of both is falling on shoulders with coils on top of head. The clay is drab grey with admixture of mica and is badly baked* (Fig. 120). Rajghat (Banaras) has yielded a couple plaque (Fig. 121) which may be placed in early Gupta period. A couple plaque of light ochre colour, assignable to Gupta period is in Mathura Museum (MM 2349).

Bacchanalian Couples

Drinking (*madhupana*) seems to have been much in vogue in ancient India, and we find drinking couples on some clay plaques. These plaque seem to belong to a local type of clay art at Kausambi. In one sub-type the man and the woman are sitting on wicker-stools. The man holds the drinking cup (*madhu-patra*) and the woman a wine-jar (*madhu-ghata*) in her upraised hands. The male is taking the wine towards his lips.² Another plaque shows a drunken and drooping woman being supported by the male. The woman is bent on her trembling legs and the man standing behind is taking one of his hands near her navel.³ This plaque is similar to the sculpture now in Patna Museum.⁴ A very sensitive portrayal of this subject is depicted a little differently in a Mathura relief.⁵ These plaques belong to the Kushāṇa period.

This subject continued to be depicted in clay in the Gupta period at Kausambi. A number of narrow long panels found there show a drunken and drooping female resting on her right knee and left foot, and the man is trying to lift her up by holding her both hands. The vacant space is decorated by a fine creeper.⁶

Scene of Elopement

A somewhat strange and uncommon scene is that of a

1. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, fig. 69.

2. *Terracotta Figurines from Kausambi*, p. 29.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

4. *J. I. S. O. A.*, Vol. VI, pl. XLIII, 1.

5. *Ibid.*, pl. XXII, 1.

6. Kala, *Prayag Sangrahalaya Ki Kuchha Mrinmurtiyan*, *J. U. P. H. S.*, vol. XXI, p. 133, fig. 11.

woman eloping with a young man on a plaque from Mathura (MM 3481) (*Fig. 122*). A similar scene is depicted on a stone sculpture found at Mathura, now in Lucknow Museum.

Erotic Scenes

A special local type comes from Kausambi depicting erotic scenes. By their style they seem to be assignable to first century B. C.—first century A. D. These are frankly sensual scenes related to *Kamasutra* postures. They were probably produced by the potters to cater to the tastes of a particular type of patrons and must have been distributed secretly as nude studies. These plaques have been described and illustrated by Shri Kala. Outside Kausambi, they are either unknown or extremely rare. One specimen was found in 1937, by Shri K. Deva in excavations at Nagar in Jaipur, but the specimen was subsequently misplaced or lost.

Mother and Child

Mother with a babe in her arm, is a subject very close to family life, but strangely enough its representation in Śuīga art is extremely rare. However the type becomes common in Kushāpa art, both in stone sculptures and clay-figurines. It becomes still more popular in the Gupta period. This type of figurines—female standing with the child in her left arm—in the Kushāpa period is known only from Mathura (MM 1621) (*Fig. 123*). But it is interesting not so much for its subject as for its very similarity in pose and style with a *suka-krida* figurine known from the same site (MM 2592) (*Fig. 87*).

In the Gupta period numerous plaques are known of this subject at various sites in the Gangetic valley, with the standing woman holding the child in her left arm. In some cases the child touches the breast with his left hand¹ (*Fig. 114*). In another variety, the female holds some play object like a ball or rattle in her right hand² (*Fig. 125-126*). These may

1. Agrawala, Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra, fig. 183.

2. *Ibid.*, figs. 184-87.

be called *kridadhatri*. In a third variety woman has the baby held in her lap with her both hands. Mostly the head of the baby is to her right (*Fig. 127*) but in a few cases to left also (*Fig. 128*). This type has been mainly found at Rajghat (Banaras). In a plaque, found at Mathura and now in Indian Museum, the woman is sitting on some stool and having the baby in her lap holding it with her both hands and the baby is sucking her left breast (IM 6535) (*Fig. 129*). In a fourth variety the standing woman has the child in standing posture, sucking her left breast.¹ All these figurines are stylistically related in every respect to the female figurines of the Gupta period described above.

These figurines are either mother with child or may be nurses. Dr. Agrawala quotes the *Divyavadana* and other works of Sanskrit Buddhist literature to show that several classes of nurses were employed to attend on royal princes. For the child Chandraprabha four kinds of nurses were employed :—*Ankadhatri* (having child in her arm), *maladhatri* (one who bathed the child and washed the linen), *stanadhatri* or *kshiradhatri* (one who fed the child with her milk) and *kridadhatri* (one who entertained the child with play-things and toys).² These types of female attendants are also recorded in the early Jain literature. And here in the clay art we have three out of the four types of the *dhatris* (nurses).

Children

Finely executed small figurines of children are known from Rajghat belonging to the Gupta period. They show standing child with a ball (*Fig. 130*) or some other object (*Fig. 131*) or carrying some thing over his left shoulder (*Fig. 132*). A figurine of child shows a seated boy holding some thing in his both upraised hands (MM 2775) (*Fig. 133*).

Scenes of Amusements

Our ancient modellers also acquaint us through their

1. *Ibid.*, fig. 181.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

work with the gay side of the life, namely games and amusements of the people. Music and dancing formed the principal and popular recreation from the early Vedic period up to the medieval times. And we find such scenes depicted in the clay plaques of the Śuṅga and the subsequent periods.

Some Śuṅga plaques are known from Mathura depicting dancing woman. In a plaque a woman is in standing posture with right leg raised in the rhythm and both hands raised over head, the head bent towards right. She is dressed with the undercloth tied round the waist with a broad fillet flowing down. The figure shows a graceful pose (MM 2635; also a lower half MM 2247) (*Figs. 134-135*). Another figurine from the same site shows the dancer having her left hand over the eyes as if she is expressing some dramatic suggestion (MM 3491) (*Fig. 136*).

A few Kushāṇa plaques are also known as depicting the dancers. In a fragmentary plaque from Mathura a man is shown dancing with two females (MM 2474) (*Fig. 136*). On another plaque from the same site, a couple is sitting underneath two trees. The man has a harp and before them a woman is dancing. The plaque is in National Museum and unpublished. A copy of the same is in Patna Museum (PM 78 11). A fragment of this plaque is in Mathura Museum (MM 3357). On a plaque from Kausambi a lady is depicted in rhythmic dancing pose; a lute player is seen on a wicker-stool on the right side; on the ground is a dwarfish boy playing on some instrument like *khartal*.¹

But numerous are the plaques which represent the scene of playing on musical instruments. A seated male is shown playing on a harp on a plaque from Mathura (MM 2643) (*Fig. 138*). On another plaque from Mathura a standing male figure is seen playing on the same instrument (MM 2642; also MM 2258; IM 1423, another specimen in Baroda Museum) (*Fig. 139-140*).

1. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 38.

A woman with a long lute occurs on a plaque from Sarnath. A female playing drum is known from Kausambi (AM 862).¹ A picnic-party scene is depicted on a plaque representing a cart. Three persons are seated on either side of the cart. One of them is playing a lute and the other a *mridanga*. A woman is seen in dancing pose.² All these plaques belong to Śuṅga and Kushāṇa periods. Rajghat has produced a number of small figurines of a boy sitting and playing on a drum. These are finely executed and are exquisite examples of Gupta art (Figs. 142-143).

Other recreations also have found favour with the clay artists and they have used their art in depicting them. On a Gupta plaque from Rajghat, the scene of a swing on Aśoka tree (*asoka-prenkha*) is depicted. A long swing is suspended from the branch of a full grown Aśoka tree in full blossom, and a woman poised on it enjoys its rocking movements³ (Fig. 144).

A plaque from Mathura shows a prince or a nobleman going out of a city gate in a chariot drawn by four stags. The shape of gateway is very much similar to those found at Sanchi and Bharhut having high uprights, architraves, capitals etc. The man holds in his right hand a whip and in the left the reins.⁴ (Fig. 145). The yoking of stags is peculiar and shows that people used to employ them for such fancies of men of high position.

Hunting, another favourite game, is also depicted in clay. Horsemen chasing boars is a forceful scene depicted on a round plaque now in Mathura Museum (MM 2411 and 3579;

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* p. 70, pl. XLII.

3. V. S. Agrawala, Rajghat Terracottas, *J. I. S. O. A.* Vol. IX, p. 9, pl. I.

4. M. M. Nagar, Some Terracottas from Mathura, *J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. XVII, pt. II, p. 74.

both are identical but were found at two places. One came from Mathura area and the other from Ahichchhatra).

Scenes from public life

In illustrating the life of men and women, the clay-artists had their eyes not only on their domestic life, but also depicted scenes of public interest. And we find some figurines which illustrate men engaged in various occupations.

A number of figurines found at Ahichchhatra and Rajghat represent foot-soldiers or palace attendants, distinguished by their dress which consists of a knee-long coat (*kanchuka*) and a short dagger inserted in the belt on the proper right side. The figures are tall and well built, having long legs and erect posture¹ (*Fig. 146*). In some specimens the figures are found having a baton or staff (*lakuta*) in the right or left hand². (*Figs. 147-148*).

A standing figure of an ascetic with a short beard, and hair tied in a top knot on head has been found at Ahichchhatra. He wears a short dark dress (*valkala*) falling to the knee; holds with both hands a basket of flowers (*pushpa-changerika*)³. The type is closely related to the young ascetic figures at Sanchi.

In a Gupta plaque found at Rajghat a hunter (*lubdhaka*) is shown standing holding a string in his right hand to which is secured a spirited deer, which he is feeding with grass. The young strong figure has a short dagger (*asi-putrika*) attached to the girdle on the right thigh. On his right hangs a bundle probably of peacock feathers (*Fig. 149*)⁴. A similar fragmentary plaque is in Patna Museum probably from Lauriya Nandangarh.

1. Agrawala, Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra, fig. 189.

2. *Ibid.*, fig. 192-3.

3. *Ibid.*, fig. 80.

4. Agrawala, Rajghat Terracottas, *J. I. S. O. A.*, vol. IX, p. 10, pl. II.5.

Historical Episodes and Romances

The artists did not confine themselves to depicting the contemporary life of men and women but they also portrayed historical romantic scenes.

The artists of Kausambi depicted an important episode from the life of Udayana, the famous king of the Vats country. The scene of the dramatic flight of Udayana with Vasavadattā is depicted on several plaques found at Kausambi. These plaques depict the same scene with minor variations. On the best preserved plaque, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, is shown a running elephant with three riders. Vasavadattā holds the goad in her right hand and by her side is seated Udayana holding the lute Ghoshavatī. Behind him is seated the court jester Vasantaka with his body bent backward and showering coins from a purse. On the ground are shown two foot-soldiers of Mahāsena's army, who pick up the coins and thus are delayed in pursuing Udayana (*Figs. 150-151*).

A number of plaques depicting chained elephant or elephant uprooting trees have been found at Kausambi. The elephants on these plaques have been identified by Shri Kala with the infuriated elephant of Udayana, which according to the traditions was kept chained. One day it pulled out its post, went to the city and created great panic amongst the people. On this occasion the musical proficiency of Udayana brought the elephant under control. A plaque shows Nalagiri with its feet chained (AM. 535) and another plaque shows it uprooting the trunk of a tree (AM 220)¹.

A terracotta medallion found in the excavations at Bhita in 1911-12, depicts the most striking incident of the story of Śakuntalā. The medallion is stamped on both sides with the same scene, wherein Dushyanta and his charioteer on a

1. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 41.

chariot are being entreated by a hermit not to kill the antelope which has taken refuge in Kaṇva's hermitage. The medallion depicts the hermit's hut and in front of it, Śakuntalā with her two female friends watering the trees.¹ This incident of the life of Śakuntalā is well described in the first book of Mahābhārata, but the details of the medallion agree better with the scene described in his drama by Kālidāsa. According to John Marshall the plaque was found in a stratum of Śuṅga period. The style of plaque is also suggestive of this period. It would thus appear that the plaque ante-dates by several centuries the time of Kālidāsa (he is placed in the Gupta period). Marshall further observes that it recalls in every feature the reliefs of Sanchi, but the workmanship of the mould, from which this relief was cast, is infinitely more minute and delicate than any workmanship in stone or marble could ever be.²

Another fragmentary plaque from Mahasthangarh (north Bengal) now in Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, also most likely represents the same scene from the life of Śakuntalā. A man riding on a chariot drawn by four horses is depicted as discharging an arrow at a herd of deer, which are running in fear and a lady is shown patting a deer (*Fig. 153*).

Another story is depicted in a peculiar scene portraying a demon lifting a lady on several plaques of Kausambi. S. C. Kala has described the scene thus: The demon is wearing thick bracelets, ear-rings and dhoti; has sunken cheeks and grinning teeth. He stands on the right side seizing a woman in his arms. One of her legs is set on his right arm and the other is held by the demon. She is crying for help with her both hands raised up.³ It is not possible to identify the story to which it

1. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 40.

2. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 35-36.

3. *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 44.

relates, but it is not unlikely, it may be Rāvaṇa's abduction of Sītā, a scene from the Rāmāyaṇa.

Figurines from double-mould

Up to the Śuṅga period double moulds were seldom used in making the clay figurines. Only two instances are known so far of the use of double moulds in the Śuṅga period. One is of the Śakuntalā medallion of Bhita, described above; and the other is of a figurine from Mathura of a woman standing holding a lotus bud (MM 2597). While in the former the same subject is repeated on the two sides, the latter represents the front and back of the female figurine, produced out of two separate moulds. In using two different moulds the thickness has become blurred and a sort of double figure is produced.¹

In Kushāṇa period, it appears that an experiment in double moulding was made at Kausambi. An attempt was made to produce two different figures on the same plaque from two different moulds. On one side it depicts a dancing lady and on the other a female standing touching her ear-ring with her right upraised hand.² But the use of double moulds in its proper sense was in vogue only at Ahichchhatra during the period 100-350 A. D. and was common between 100-200 A. D. in producing a particular type of nude bow-legged dwarfish figure (*Fig. 154*)³. A few specimens of it are known from Mathura and Kausambi also.

Technically on a solid core of clay, the back and front moulds were pressed simultaneously and then removed; after this the spare clay was pared off, having a mark along the joint. The modeller then retouched the figure and freed the arms and legs from the body.

1. Agrawala, *Mathura Terracottas*, p. 31, fig. 33.

2. Kala, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

3. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, p. 118-122, figs. 53-70.

In this very technique we find the double-moulded figurines of riders on horse-back and on elephant in the Gupta period. A number of these riders have been found at Ahichhatra and Rajghat (*Figs. 155-156*). A rider on bull in this technique is known from Mathura (MM 57) (*Fig. 157*). This technique is mostly applied to the production of animal figurines, but they too are not numerous.

A better technique of double-mould developed in this period wherein the two moulds were used independently to produce the two halves separately and then they were joined together. The advantage of this technique was that the figure could be produced in round, well proportionate and light in weight. This technique is very common today, but appears that it was seldom used in the early days in the Gangetic valley. The figurines that we find in this technique are mostly animals. Only a few pieces of human figures could be noticed among thousands of terracotta figurines found at Rajghat and Kausambi. It is doubtful if any other site has produced figurines in this technique. But it was most likely common in the South. A number of human and animal figures made out of this technique dated to early Gupta period are known from Kondapur in Andhra Pradesh.

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Chapter VI

BIG MOULDED HEADS AND LIFE-SIZE IMAGES

In the Gupta and post-Gupta periods figures of large size are found. They were produced by employing a combination of the technique of moulds and hand-modelling. The modelers took up the parts of the body from different moulds, applied stamps for ornaments and decorations where necessary, and modelled the figures freely and finished them with the aid of tools. With this technique they produced figures of big dimensions, sometimes more than life-size. To make the images lighter, they made them hollow from inside. To this effect they took some combustible material like cowdung in the form of dried lump and used it as a core under the wet clay, and then gave the desired shape either with the moulds or with the scrapers. A hole was made in the back or in the bottom. When the figure was put to fire, the combustible material inside the clay burnt and was expelled through the hole in the form of ashes.

Most of the figures in this technique, that are known today are heads. The earliest of them belong to the Gupta period and are known mostly from Sankisa, Ahichchhatra and Rajghat. The Sankisa heads are in the Lucknow Museum but unfortunately they have not yet been published. An examination of these heads shows that they are made of fine clay and are smoothly fashioned. They show natural expression in the eyes and lips and have hair styles typical of the Gupta period that we find in the moulded plaques.

Ahichchhatra has produced a few male and female heads and a few figures of gods and goddesses in this technique belonging to Gupta period. They show a pleasing variety of hair styles in the traditions of Gupta art as developed

in the fifth and sixth centuries A. D. (*Figs. 158-159*). But by far the most charming specimens from this site are the heads of Śiva and Pārvatī found in the Śiva temple (*Figs. 160-161*). A head from Mathura, now in Lucknow Museum, is so finely executed in clay that it appears as if sculptured in stone (LM B215d) (*Fig. 162*). Rajghat has also yielded such Gupta heads. Some of them are being illustrated here (*Figs. 163-164*).

Besides heads a few specimens are also known of the body of the figurines of this period from Ahichchhatra. Among them are a torso of Chāmūṇḍā and a headless image of the same goddess seated on pedestal (*Figs. 167-168*). The figures, when complete, would have been about 2 feet in height. The modellers also produced clay images of life-size. Life-size images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā are known from Ahichchhatra, which were found installed in the niches on the two sides of the staircase leading to the upper terrace of the Śiva temple of the Gupta period. Another life-size female figure with two children is known from Kasia and is now in Lucknow Museum. It has been identified by V. S. Agrawala as Pārvatī with Skanda and Gaṇeśa.¹ It is interesting for more than one reason. It is hollow, sun-baked and has got traces of colour. It is of about the fifth century A.D. Two other life-size sitting images were found at Kausambi during the excavations of 1950-51 at the site of Ghoshitārāma. One of them is the figure of Gaja-lakshmī—Lakshmī sitting in the centre and two elephants pouring water over her head; the other is an unidentified goddess. They appear to be of late Gupta period, but in the excavations they have been found in a Kushāṇa level.² (*Figs. 169-170*).

Post-Gupta modelled figures have been found at almost all the sites and they are mostly heads. Most of them have

1. Agrawala, *Studies in Indian Art*, p. 252, pls. V-VI.

2. Agrawala, *Gupta Art*, p. 12.

3. See *Kausambi Excavations*, New Delhi, 1970.

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projecting tenons for the attachment with the modelled busts. These heads have been found at Ahichchhatra in the stratum which may be dated from about 450 to 750 A. D.¹ This type of heads were also found in the excavations at Bhita. Marshall has dated them in the Kushāṇa period.² Most likely on that basis V. S. Agrawala has assigned the figures of this type found at Ghosi to the Kushāṇa period.³

These heads, male and female (*Figs. 171-172*), though found in abundance, have few varieties of coiffures and head-dresses. Most of the male figures have a projecting turban-roll at the back or above the forehead marked by incised grooves to indicate twisted folds. The female figures are marked by a common style of rendering the strands into a vertical projection above the head in the manner of a frill, at the base of which the hair is turned up so as to form a slight ridge, projecting on the forehead. The broad-tressed locks dangle beside the ears. The vermillion dot is conspicuously represented as a punched circlet in the angle of eyebrows which are always deeply marked. The eyes are prominently set in, generally in the lenticular shape with the pupils indicated by pierced holes. The ears are usually elongated and have a hole perforated in the lobe to which are attached loop-shaped pendants or rings, even rosettes.

We have no idea about the body of these heads, but certain figures have been found at Ahichchhatra and at many other sites which show a hollow cylindrical body. Most likely the tenon of the heads was inserted into these bodies. The cylindrical body some time appears to have been made on wheels, but mostly they are made by spirals of wet clay placed one over the other. The inner and the outer faces of the cylinder

1. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, p. 155.

2. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 71.

3. V. S. Agrawala, *Terracottas from Ghosi, J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. X, pt. 1, p. 59-64.

were smoothened as the height grew.¹ On such a dried cylindrical body extra clay was applied to work out the details of the bust and a pair of arms added (*Fig. 183*).

V.S. Agrawala has pointed out that these figures represent the foreigners from Persia and Central Asia, but their precise identification and fixing of their relative sequence are not yet possible owing to the paucity of the reliable material. However, tentatively he has distinguished a few types of foreigners in these figures.

(1) Sassanian Persians with a peaked chin, covered very often with a short beard, aquiline or long 'Parsi' nose, heavy eyelets, some time applique, crio-sphinx eyes, a round turban or *kulah* cap. A corresponding female type also occurs.²

ii) Some Central Asian nomads, whose precise identification is still uncertain, are represented by those figures in which the head often has a conspicuous size, plumped cheeks, a double chin and usually ends in a tenon by which it was fixed in the rest of the modelled body'.³

(iii) Kidara-Kushāṇas have round protruding eyes or round eyes indicated by circular applied pellets. These features are traceable in the faces of the figures on the coins of Kidara-Kushāṇas.⁴

(iv) Hepthalite Hūṇas have a hollow cylindrical body with the tenon of moulded big head inserted into it. The Hepthalites are known as represented on their coins in similar round cylindrical style.⁵

1. Agrawala, *Gupta Art*, pp. 12-3.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

3. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, p. 158.

4. *Ibid.*

5. The technique of making the cylinder was observed by me on a specimen which was affected by salt-petre. When it was placed under water for the treatment it broke out in pieces of spirals and furnished evidence of its technique.

CHAPTER VII

ARCHITECTURAL TERRACOTTA ART OR BAS-RELIEFS

Bas-reliefs in stone are very common in Indian sculpture but at places where stone was not easily available, the architects employed clay. The clay modellers, with the help of simple scrappers produced different scenes on plaques of bigger size. These were generally partly moulded and partly modelled but in some cases the whole plaque even of a big size was produced with a mould.

The available material shows that the terracotta bas-reliefs were likely introduced as architectural panels towards the end of the Kushāna period or in the beginning of Gupta period. The early examples are known from Harvan in Kashmir,¹ and Suratgarh, Rangmahal, Barapal and Hanumangarh in Bikaner.² They have also been found at Mirpur Khas (Sind) decorating the walls of the Stūpas.³ This art spread gradually from the north-west and west towards east; and in post-Gupta period it spread to Bengal and Assam and even beyond India, in Burma, Thailand and Indonesia. In Bengal it survived till the beginning of the last century.

The terracotta bas-reliefs are either purely decorative or depict some motifs or scenes of life and legend. The bas-reliefs which are purely of decorative ornamentation, represent chequered patterns, scroll work, usually combined with fantastic birds and beasts. Among the latter are the *Kirtimukhas* and the *makaras*. At places the temples are decorated with the tiers of niches of various sizes, either round or square,

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1918-19, pt. I, p. 21, pl. XI.

2. *Ibid.*, 1917-18, pt. I, p. 22-23, pl. XII-XIII.

3. *Ibid.*, 1909-10, pp. 80-92.

having heads. Sometimes these contained projecting busts. The bricks having decorative patterns are known in the Gangetic plain in the brick temple of Satohakund (Mathura), in the temple of Buddha's nativity at the site of Lumbini garden, in the Sarnath Stūpa, Kasia, and at Bhitargaon, Nalanda and Gaya. The decorative bricks that are found at these sites, most likely belong to the Gupta period. But this art flourished also at much later a date, as they have been found at Kurari, Bahua, Parauli and Tenduli temples in Fatehpur and Kanpur districts, and at many places in Bengal.

But more important are the bas-reliefs depicting the scenes from lives and legends. The earliest and the only surviving brick temple with such terracotta panels in the Gangetic valley is the temple at Bhitargaon in Kanpur district. Cunningham judging from its style, was of the opinion that the temple was not later than 7th or 8th century A. D.¹ But Vogel has pointed out to the decorations of this temple being very much similar to those that have been noticed in the early plinth of the Nirvāṇa temple at Kasia, which cannot be later than the Gupta period and possibly goes back even to the Kushāṇa period.² Most of the bas-reliefs of this temple are so badly damaged that the subject can no longer be identified. Cunningham noticed in the centre of the back or the west wall a representation of Varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu, on the north side a four-armed Durgā and on the south a four-armed Gaṇeśa, who is apparently standing or dancing.³ Vogel has recognised on the east wall on the two sides of the porch the representation of goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The panel on the proper right of the porch shows a female figure standing on what appears to be a *Makara*. She is

1. *C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XI, p. 40-16.

2. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1904-5, p. 48.

3. *C. A. S. R.*, XI, p. 40-46.

attended by two smaller figures, one of which holds a parasol over the goddess, who seems to rest her left hand on the head of the other attendant standing in front of her. In the right hand she must have had a lotus stalk, the flower of which is preserved in one of the upper corners of the panel. The corresponding panel on the upper left is almost entirely defaced, but the parasol in the upper corner near the entrance is still plainly visible.¹

Besides these big panels, the spire was decorated with numerous tiers of niches of various sizes. Some of these niches contained the bas-relief panels. One of such panels is illustrated by Cunningham. It represents the well known scene of Vishṇu reclining on Śeṣhaṇaga, while Brahmā is seated on a lotus, the stalk of which issues from Vishṇu's navel. In front of the sleeping god we notice the asuras Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who, each armed with a mace, are ready to attack Brahmā.² The panel is now preserved in Indian Museum, Calcutta (*Fig. 184*).

A circular panel shows a bust of a man with an interesting hair style. Right half of the hair is in the style of twisted spiral curls arranged in parallel tiers and the left half is simply combed backward. It is not easy to suggest if it represents Ardhanaṛīśvara Śiva or a common man with an uncommon coiffure (*Fig. 185*). Another panel which was found by A. H. Longhurst depicts four-armed Gaṇeśa holding in one left hand a basket of his favourite sweet-balls and a male figure most likely Kārttikeya is moving towards him in threatening attitude to dispossess him of his favourite food (*Fig. 186*). Both these panels are now preserved in Lucknow Museum. Recently some more panels of the temple were published. These panels show that the terracotta sculptures of Bhitargaon temple were well moulded and full of

1. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1903-9, pl. IV. fig. 3.

2. *C.A.S.R.*, XI. pl. XVII.

action and represent a superior workmanship of late Gupta period.¹

In the excavations of 1907-8 at Sahet-Mahet, the ancient site of Śrāvastī, were found abundance of fragmentary terracotta plaques around the main temple (Kachchi Kuti). These panels belonged distinctly to two periods. The early panels, most likely, were of the same time as those of Bhitargaon and are of similar workmanship. Some of the panels of this period which were later found from this site and are in Lucknow Museum, are interesting. One most probably represents Śiva as Yogi and the other Durgā sitting on her lion (*Figs. 187-188*). Several of the fragments that were found in the excavation, contain the legs of an apparently seated figure with a boot. It probably represented Sūrya. There is also a border fragment with an exquisitely modelled hand. Another fragment shows the paw of a monkey. These bas-reliefs have either plain borders or are engraved with a simple geometrical pattern. These figures are well modelled and well baked and are as hard as bricks.

The later panels also belong to the same period, but they are slightly later than the panels described above. These are a bit thicker than the early plaques and differ in size. These are imperfectly burnt and are black, and comparatively soft inside. These are provided with a raised border crudely decorated with a foliated design. It is noteworthy that on the complete panels we find double border on the proper left side whereas on the proper right the border is missing. This clearly indicates that these bas-reliefs were meant to form a continuous frieze on the wall of the building. Some of these panels are marked with numerical figures evidently indicating the position they were to occupy in the frieze. Among the fragmentary panels recovered, seven are more or less complete. Most of these panels have been identified as the

1, *Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology in U. P.*, No 1, p. 11-13, No 2, p. 30-35.

scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. But nine fragments of these when put together formed a panel of semi-circular shape representing a woman running after a little boy which may be identified as some episode of Kṛishṇa's childhood and that the woman is Yaśodā. The action of figures in these panels, which mostly contain only two figures, is well expressed but the treatment of faces, hands and feet is second rate in comparison to the panels of Bhitargaon.¹

The excavations at Ahichchhatra have brought to light a Śiva temple, of which construction may be assigned to Gupta period. Large terracotta plaques were fixed in a frieze running round the upper terrace of the building. Several of them are distinguished by excellent workmanship and on the basis of their style may be assigned to a period between c. 450 to 650 A. D. Most of the plaques depict Śiva's life and his exploits.² Among these plaques is one showing a battle scene between two warriors riding in their chariots. One of them, as identified by T. N. Ramachandran, is Jayadratha, distinguished by the boar-standard (*Varaha-ketu*) and the other Yudhisṭhira by the crescent-standard (*Soma-ketu*) described in the *Mahābhārata* (*Droṇaparva*) (*Fig. 189*).³

Some stray Gupta terracotta bas-reliefs were found at Mathura and Chausa (district Shahabad, Bihar) and are now in Mathura and Patna Museums respectively. Most of the Mathura specimens were found in the bed of Yamunā river near Isapur. One of them shows an amusement scene relating to the inmates of a palace. Therein a young woman is pulling a jester by a scarf thrown round his neck (MM 2795) (*Fig. 190*). Another panel depicts a yogī cutting his head with a sword (MM 2092) (*Fig. 191*). In a third plaque Kārttikeya is depicted riding on his peacock Parvaṇi (MM 2793) (*Fig. 192*). Pārvatī with Skanda in her lap is the subject of another panel (MM 411) (*Fig. 193*). All

1. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1907-8, pp. 95-107; pl. xxvii.

2. Agrawala, *Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, p. 167-171.

3. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII, p. 304-311.

these panels are beautiful specimens of Gupta art and are better executed than any bas-relief from any other site. A Patna Museum specimen from Chausa depicts a Rāmāyana scene where Rāma and Lakshmaṇa are shown amidst the monkeys.¹ Stylistically it may be placed with the terracotta panels of Isapur (Mathura).

Post-Gupta terracotta bas-relief art is confined to eastern India, particularly Bengal, and there it developed profusely and became the established tradition in decorating the exterior wall surface of the temples, which continued up to the end of the 18th century A. D.

A few seventh century bas-relief terracotta panels, I am told by D. P. Ghosh of the Asutosh Museum (Calcutta University) were found in Bogra district. But their details are unknown. So, the earliest and by far the most numerous terracotta bas-reliefs of the post-Gupta period were found at Paharpur in Dinajpur district (East Bengal) in the excavation of the Buddhist temple. About 2000 panels still lie *in situ* in the walls of the temple, while 400 were found in the excavation.² The period for the original construction has been assigned to the late 8th and the beginning of the 9th century A. D., but it has got another period of its life dated to tenth and eleventh centuries. The manufacture of the terracotta plaques continued during these two centuries is evidenced from various sources. But the most important is the plaque in which on the leg of an antelope are incised some letters which cannot be earlier than the tenth century. The letters show that the incision was done prior to the firing of the plaque.

1. K. P. Jayaswal, "A note on terracotta Rāmāyana panel of Gupta period and on sikhara temples", *Modern Review*, Vol. LII, p. 148-150.

2. K. N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur*, p. 56.

These plaques were used in two or three rows in the decoration of the basement and the walls of first floor of the temple. A large number of these are still standing in the position in which they were originally fixed, but most of the upper rows of the plaques have become detached. The plaques used in the walls of the ground floor of the main temple are of a standard size of $14'' \times 4''$ to $4\frac{1}{2}''$. Special plaques, which occupy the corners or the angles of walls, were required to face on two sides and were thus larger in dimensions. Plaques fixed in the upper rows on the first terrace were made in a special size, about $6''$ square. At the end of the scale are some unusually big plaques measuring $16'' \times 12'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ or $15\frac{1}{2}'' \times 14'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}''$.

Ruins of edifices contemporary to the Paharpur temple, i. e. belonging to the period between 8th and 11th centuries, were found during an exploration across the low hill ranges in Tipperah district near Commilla, which extend for about ten miles north to south from Mainamati to Lalmai railway station. The sites known as Anandraj palace, Rupabana Kanya palace, Bhojraja palace, Itakhola, Rupabana mura, Kothari and Salbanraj have yielded rich harvests of terracotta bas-relief panels which were used in decorating monasteries, which in many cases were as that of Paharpur.¹

Some bas-relief panels were also found at Mahasthan² and Gokul³ in Bogra district. At Mahasthan in 1928-29 over a dozen plaques similar in execution to the Paharpur examples were found at a temple site.⁴ From Govind Bhita, near Mahasthan, also some panels were found.⁵ Another village

1. T. N. Ramachandran, "Recent Archaeological discoveries along the Mainamati and Lalmai ranges," *B. C. Law Volume*, Part II, pp. 213-230.
2. *A. S. I., A. R.* 1928-29, p. 96.
3. *Ibid.*, 1935-36, p. 68-69.
4. *Ibid.*, 1928-29, p. 96.
5. *Ibid.*, 1936-37.

in that vicinity, Gukul also yielded some terracotta bas-relief panels, which were assigned to 6th or 7th century A. D. by N. G. Majumdar,¹ but the photographs of these show that they are not in any case earlier than Paharpur plaques.

Then with a long gap in between, we find the temple at Mathurapur in district Faridpur, which was constructed probably towards the end of the fifteenth cent. A. D. Since then we get a long chain of brick temples with terracotta bas-relief panels down to the early 19th century A.D. Specimens of all these centuries from numerous sites are collected in the Asutosh Museum (Calcutta University) and the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta. The terracotta panels collected in the Asutosh Museum are from the following sites and belong to the period mentioned before them.

Fifteenth century A. D. (1) Gaur.

Sixteenth century A. D. (1) Naladaga (district Jessore); (2) Pathia (Rajshahi); (3) Maina (Burdwan); (4) Bakreswar (Burdwan).

Seventeenth century A. D. (1) Simuleswara (Barisal); (2) Kanchannagar (Burdwan); (3) Panchakuti (Manbhum); (4) Jagatballabheswar (Hooghly); (5) Saipara (Rajshahi); (6) Bally (Hooghly); (7) Bonpas (Burdwan); (8) Vikramapur (Dacca); (9) Siddhakuti (Barisal); and (10) Gopinathpur.

Eighteenth century A. D. (1) Barasingha (Midnapur); (2) Shantipur (Nadia); (3) Gopinagar (Hooghly); (4) Tribeni (Hooghly); (5) Dhulgram (Jessore); (6) Boral (24 Pargana); (7) Muragachi (Nadia); (8) Azimganj (Murshidabad); (9) Vishnupur (Bankura); (10) Nannor (Birbhum).

Early Nineteenth century A.D. (1) Navadvipa (Nadia). *

The Bangiya Sahitya Parishad collection includes terracotta bas-relief panels from (1) Gauda; (2) Pandua; (3) Saptagram

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1935-36, p. 68-69, pl. XXVII.

2. For this list I owe to D. P. Ghosh, the Curator of the Museum.

(Hooghly); (4) Jasohara; (5) Bhushana; (6) Vishnupur (Bankura); (7) Dinajpur; (8) Rajshahi; (9) Baranagar (Murshidabad); (10) Saligram (Nadia); (11) Baganchra (Nadia); (12) Naria (Faridpur); (13) Paljia (Pabna); (14) Garbgajli (Mymensingh); (15) Kamakhya Hills; (16) Hooghly; (17) Pursottampur (Hooghly); (18) Boinchi (Hooghly).¹ But there is nothing to know to which period they belong.

Since the period after 1200 A. D. is beyond the scope of the present survey, I shall not mention the bas-reliefs known from these places. But it may be added that their study, beginning from the eighth century right up to the nineteenth century, shows that the clay artists of Bengal had drawn their themes not only from religious stories but also from the daily life of the people and varied world of animals and plants. It appears that the freedom from the restrictions of iconography and religious canons enabled them to give expression to their fancy freely. They have represented a variety of interesting subjects.

In Paharpur terracotta panels Buddhist and non-Buddhist gods and goddesses are equally found. There appears no attempt to set apart any place for these two types of divinities. But in Mainamati only Buddhist deities are known. In the later period in Bengal, Vaishnavism, accentuated by the works of Jayadeva and Chāṇḍīdāsa and the life and teachings of Chaitanya, took the place of all early beliefs in the field of religion. Consequently in the domain of art, this renaissance asserted itself in the representation of Kṛishṇa Līlā and Gaurāṅga Līlā and of the mother-goddess cult in its various forms. It also adopted and depicted the Rāma Līlā and some

1. M. Ganguly, *Handbook of the sculptures in the Museum of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad*. The list is prepared from this book, which occasionally mentions the provenance of the exhibits, but does not give their dates. The exhibits in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad building are kept just like a godown. I had no means to check and verify the exhibits mentioned in the book.

of the mythologies. Tantrism had also its sway over the art of Bengal and we find erotic scenes represented in the terracotta panels on the pattern of Khajuraho and Konarka. The panels depict these themes either singly or in series of plaques.

The clay-modellers, in addition to depicting religious scenes were also alive to depicting the social life around them. The hunting and other scenes relating to the life of Śābaras and the aboriginals of Bengal have formed a favourite subject for the clay artists of Paharpur. Men and women depicted in various movements occupy a large portion of the Paharpur plaques. Several plaques depict male and female warriors, ascetics, travelling mendicants, cultivators with ploughs. The later clay sculptors living on the bank of Gaṅga and its lower branches, show on clay plaques scenes of maritime life in the form of seafaring boats. The activities of Portuguese who sailed up to the river did not escape their attention. Plaques giving realistic representation of Portuguese sailing boats are also to be found in several terracotta temples particularly in Naladanga (district Jessore). Portuguese bishops also occur on plaques decorating Hindu temples.

Chapter VIII

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF CLAY FIGURES

Besides serving as an evidence of art and material culture the clay figures also throw light on the religious beliefs of the people. The development of Indian iconography is well represented in clay figures and it is not difficult to draw from them a religious picture of the period beginning from late Śuṅga times. But for the pre-Śuṅga periods, it is not easy to draw definite inferences about religious worship from the clay figurines. A number of clay figurines, which are technically archaic and are found from the early period, are taken by scholars as representing the very early religious beliefs of the people.

There is no marked difference between the figurines to be worshiped and the figurines to be used as toys. In many cases, they may have served as toys for children and images for the worshippers both. The religious and social life during the last two millennia have undergone so much changes that there is not much data to help precise identification of the figurines of a particular type as toy or effigy.

The identification of the archaic figurines with Mother-goddess was first suggested by Coomaraswamy. He wrote that 'A nude and steatopygous type occurs throughout the most ancient world. From Central Europe in the neolithic times to the Gangetic valley.' Quoting Goltz he said, 'She is the Great Mother. It is she who makes all nature bring forth. All existing things are emanations from her. She is the Madonna, carrying the holy child or watching over him. She is the mother of men, and of animals too. ...She even makes the plants grow by her universal fecundity, ...perpetuating the vegetative force of which she is the fountainhead.' Coomaraswamy further pointed out that 'Such a goddess is known in western Asia, where the nearest cognates of ancient Indian

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culture are found by such names as Anahita and Ishtar; and in India such images of later mother-goddesses and Tārā point back to an age when Anahita, known by that or by some other name, was worshipped alike in western Asia and the Indus valley. The Indian goddess Aditi has much in common with the Babylonian Ishtar.... We can safely assert that the Indian nude goddess was a goddess of fertility, for this is written unmistakably upon her image.¹

V.S. Agrawala also, following the above suggestion has brought together ample evidence from the Vedic literature in support of a wide-spread belief in a Great Mother-goddess (*Mahimata*), who seems to be represented by these figurines. She is identified with Earth, Aditi, or Universal Nature, and spoken of as the womb of all creatures.²

Thus scholars hold that, (i) the archaic female figurines that are found in widely distributed centres were intended to serve an identical purpose everywhere, viz. to represent the Great Mother Goddess; (ii) in her Indian form as revealed to us from the chalcolithic sites of the Indus valley and from the historic sites of the ancient cities in the Gangetic valley are closely related types in form and purpose; (iii) these female figurines can be identified with the Vedic and Brahmanic goddess Aditi or Universal Nature, which is also called Kadrū, Suparṇī, Saramā, Ambikā etc.; (iv) it has much in common with Babylonian Ishtar; and (v) it is a nude goddess and was the goddess of fertility.

But with due respect to the above views, it may be pointed out that the female figurines found in the Gangetic valley are removed from their predecessors of the Indus valley by about twenty centuries. They are equally distant in time from the Vedic period. The earliest date that could be assigned to the archaic figurines of the Gangetic valley is

1. "Archaic Indian Terracottas," *IPEK*, pp. 72-73.

2. "Mathura terracottas," p. 26.

the third century B. C. During this long period many of the ideas, social and religious, evolved to a considerable extent. So the question of the identification of these archaic figurines deserves to be explored further from the point of view of the folk cult, i. e. the belief in the worship of Yakshas and Yakshīs, which we find so common in Indian art and religion of that period, whether they were in any way intended to represent any one of these tutelary divinities.

Besides these, we have two other types of figurines which definitely portray the religious beliefs prevailing in the Śuṅga and the Kushāna periods. They have been identified as Vasudhārā and Śrī.

Vasudhara

Several moulded plaques have been found at Mathura with a standing female figure whose left hand is placed on the girdle and the right hand holds a string with a pair of fish suspended from its end (9 specimens in Mathura Museum: MM 1412; 1650; 2244; 2407; 2636; 2713; 2716; 3033 and T26; and one specimen in Boston Museum) (*Fig. 194*). They are stylistically related to the Yakshī figures from Bharhut and Bodhgaya. V. S. Agrawala identified these figurines as Vasudhārā.¹ One specimen from Mathura in the Boston Museum² is remarkable by its inscription in Brahmi. This was read by Coomaraswamy as *sudhata*.³ The inscription has been re-examined against the above background and it is found that the letters which are distinctly preserved may be read as *sudhara* with the possibility of an initial *va* now defaced, thus pointing to the name 'Vasudhārā' of the goddess represented in this form.

Vasudhārā, the presiding deity of *vasus* or riches, is a Buddhist goddess and according to Mahāyāna iconography

1. V. S. Agrawala, "Vasudhara", *J., I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VII, p. 13-17.

2. *IPEK*, pl. IV, fig. 24.

3. *Ibid.* p. 71.

she is the consort of Jambhala, the god of wealth. V. S. Agrawala has traced the origin of this goddess ultimately from the earth goddess Vasundharā, whom the *Atharvaveda* calls 'hiraṇya-vaksha', the golden bosomed, and who conceals within her womb the treasures of the world.¹ This conception of Vasudharā links the goddess with mother earth according to the Vedic literature. In Buddhist belief also she represented the earth deity, appearing in manifest form at the time of Buddha's enlightenment, when he seated himself in the earth-touching attitude.

Śrī or Lakshmī

Goddess Śrī or Lakshmī is probably the earliest amongst the Indian deities to be represented in clay. Coomaraswamy has pointed out that her cult was popular in early period. He mentioned that śrī is first referred to in the *Śatapatha Brahmana* (XI.4.3.1).² In art she appears on the Bharhut railing with the label *Sirima Devata* (śrīma). She is represented in a variety of forms, amongst lotus blossoms at Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhgaya, Manmoda, Nadasur and in the Jain cave Anantagumpha (Orissa). She is also represented on the coins of Azes, Azilises and Rajubala (c. 1st century B. C.). She is known in clay figurines from many sites.

Clay figurines representing the well known type of Gajalakshmī show the standing goddess flanked by tall stems of lotus blossoms, which serve to support a pair of elephants holding inverted jars pouring streams of water. This type of moulded figurines are known from Mathura (MM 1197; 3041; 1198A; 2437) (*Fig. 195*) and Sankisa.³ A life-size sitting image of Gajalakshmī was found in the excavations at Kauśāmbī, now in the Allahabad University Museum.

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 71.

2. *IPEK*, p. 71.

3. *C.A.S.R.*, Vol. XI, p. 28-29.

A well preserved plaque from Kauśāmbī shows goddess Lakshmi standing on a full blown lotus within exuberant shrubs and leaves of the same creeper emerging out of a tank within a railing.¹ Another plaque from the same site represents her wearing an elaborate headdress, ear-rings, necklace and resting her hands akimbo. A female attendant holding *chauri* stands on the right side.²

From Lauriya Nandangarh we know the plaques showing Lakshmi, standing on a lotus under an umbrella with attendants on either side again on two other lotuses.³

All these figurines of Śrī or Lakshmi, except the life-size image of Kauśāmbī, belong to the Śuṅga type and style. A fragmentary plaque found at Bangarh (Bangal) represents female figure in the centre attended by female figurines on either side. The central figure wears a crown and a halo around the head. This is suggested to be Lakshmi.⁴ This figurine belongs to the Kushāṇa period (2nd century A.D.).

From the Kushāṇa period onwards we find many gods and goddesses belonging to Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism, represented in clay.

Buddha and the Bodhisattvas

The earliest and probably the only known clay figure of Bodhisattva Maitreya of the Kushāṇa period is the headless standing figure, found from the excavation at Hastinapur in 1951. The image is wearing heavily folded *sanghati*, with the right hand in the *abhaya-mudra* and the left holding *Purnaghata*.

At Kasia, during the excavations in 1906-7, fragments of a large-sized terracotta Buddha were found at the site of the

1. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kauśāmbī*, p. 34-35.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

3. *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1936-37, p. 50, pl. XXIV, fig. 11, 16.

4. K.G. Goswami, *Excavations at Bangarh*, p. 19-20, pl. XXI b, 3.

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chapel of the monastery, but they were not sufficiently well preserved to enable the precise identification of the attitude. On the basis of some inscribed fragments found in the same room, the image has been assigned to the early Kushāṇa period.¹

The terracotta Bodhisattva and Buddha figures in big size are well known in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods from various sites. They may be described as follows.

Kasia. Terracotta Buddha images were installed in the niches of the early Stūpa plinth at Kasia. One such partially preserved image *in situ* and another Buddha head, fine and well preserved, was found in another part of the site during the excavations in 1906-7.² In an earlier excavation in 1904-5, in the south niche of the Nirvāṇa temple was discovered a terracotta plaque with 'the projecting figure of Buddha seated cross-legged, in the attitude of preaching'. 'The drapery is clearly indicated and covers both shoulders. The image has a rounded ushṇīśa but no ūṣṇā. The hair is arranged in curls turned to right. The features are well moulded, the eyes are large. The image probably had a halo.'³ The base of the image, 'is decorated with a row of elephants carrying flowers and placed alternately horizontally'. On the basis of its inscription it is ascribed to the fifth century A.D.⁴ Another Buddha figure of the same period was found in the niche of a Stūpa which was buried under the great Stūpa.⁵

Sarnath. During the excavations in 1904-5, three Buddha figures were found all seated in preaching attitude. The one which was found inside the Jagatsingh Stūpa had an attendant standing to left.⁶ In the excavations of 1914-15 three fragmentary terracotta plaques were found to the west of

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1906-7, p. 56.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

3. *I id.*, 1904-5, p. 47.

4. *Ibid.*, 1910-11, p. 64-65.

5. *Ibid.*, 1904-5, p. 102.

the main shrine depicting the scene of Buddha's life. Two of them illustrated the Mahāparinirvāṇa. The third had standing Buddha with two figures to his left, one extending horizontally on the ground touching with hands the left foot of Buddha and the other with raised hands in adoration. A beautifully modelled head with long flowing curly locks was also found in this excavation, and may be of some Bodhisattva.¹

Srāvastī (U.P.). A head with a scalloped halo was found at Śrāvastī in excavations in 1910-11 and may be of Buddha, though the *uṣṇīṣa* is not indicated. It may be dated in the 8th-9th century A. D.²

Ahichchhatra (U.P.). Two rectangular terracotta plaques were found, one showing Buddha seated in *padmāsana* and the other showing him standing with *abhaya-mudrā*, at Ahichchhatra in the excavations in 1940-44. The figures wear profusely folded *sanghati* covering both the shoulders. In the seated image an attendant holding a flywhisk in the right hand waits upon Buddha. Both may be assigned on the ground of style, to sixth-seventh century A. D.³

Farrukhabad (U.P.). A big headless seated image of Buddha in *padmāsana* is in Bharat Kala Bhavan and is said to have come from Farrukhabad (Fatehgarh district).

Mathura (U.P.). An over-baked seated Buddha image in *padmāsana* is in Lucknow Museum and hails from Mathura.

Bodhgaya (Bihar). A terracotta plaque found at Bodhgaya, now in Indian Museum, illustrates two Bodhisattva figures (*Fig. 196*). It may be assigned to about *circa* 8th century A.D.

Nalanda. From Nalanda no terracotta images of Buddha or Bodhisattva have been found. Instead we know from this site colossal Buddhist images made of unburnt clay which

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1914-15, p. 118.

2. *Ibid.*, 1910-11, p. 20, pl. x. 2.

3. *Ahichchhatra Terracottas*, p. 137.

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are not known from any other site. Here temple Nos. 12, 13 and 14 have produced such images. On the southern side of temple No. 12, in one of the niches is a figure of *Simhānāda Avalokēśvara*, built of clay and plastered with lime. In the sanctums of temple Nos. 13 and 14, big images of Buddha are made over a central wooden frame, which is visible at the back. Over the wooden frame moist clay was placed in masses and was later on modelled and finally white-washed and coloured. As the greater portion of the images after destruction has been washed away by rain, it is not possible to guess with any certainty the particular *mudra* of the images. But A. Ghosh reports that on the pedestal of the image in temple No. 14, he found two deer painted on either side of a wheel, which indicates that the image represented the scene of the first preaching of the Law at Sarnath.¹ These images, as is evidenced from the archaeological finds, were made in the Pāla period.

Paharpur. There are several Buddhist plaques in the temple at Paharpur. In the centre of the main eastern wall is the figure of Buddha with a halo behind the head and seated in *bhūmisparśa mudra* on a seat balanced on three pieces, the central one of which shows the *vajra* symbol. The traces of leaves on either side of the halo most likely depict the Bodhi tree; but the structures or hills on either side of the main figure are not met elsewhere. This may be an attempt by the artist to represent the hilly nature of the landscape (Pl. XLV b).² The Buddha appears on other plaques mostly in *dhyānamudra*, *bhūmisparśamudra* and *līlasana*. Buddha in *līlasana* is seen on a plaque with his right knee tucked up, his right hand in *abhaya mudra* and the left hand resting on the thigh.

1. A. S. I., A. R., 1930-34.

2. The references to the plates given here and in subsequent pages about the Paharpur plaques are of the plates of the *Excavations at Paharpur* by K. N. Dikshit.

The Bodhisattvas are more frequently represented than Buddha. A figure of Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, seated in *vajraparyanka* pose on a decorated cushion, holds in his right hand a full bloomed lotus near his chest and in left hand its stalk (Pl. XLVa). Mañjuśrī is identified on three plaques. On one the blue lotus (*utpala*), his distinguishing mark is shown in the background (Pl. XLVf). On another plaque he is seated in *līlāsana* on full bloomed lotus. Here he is identified by the presence of a curved knife (*khartari*) over a lotus in the right background (Pl. XLVf). On the third plaque his another distinguishing mark, a manuscript occurs on the lotus by the side of the seated figure. Thus the three distinguishing marks of Mañjuśrī, namely sword, book and lotus, are found on three different plaques. Bodhisattva Maītreya is seen on the plaques having a lotus in his right hand and *purnaghata* over the lotus in the left.

Female Buddhist divinities

Among the female Buddhist divinities, only Tārā can be identified on some plaques at Paharpur. She is shown there seated on a double lotus seat in *līlāsana* on a plaque (Pl. XLIVc) and on the other she is standing (Pl. XLIVd). She is identified on these plaques by the presence of the blue lotus (*utpala*), her distinguishing mark.

From Bodhgaya we have a plaque showing a six-armed Mahāyāna female deity with six different attributes in her hands (Fig.197).

Other Buddhist divinities

From Mathura we have some Kuṣṭhāra figurines of Kubera and Hārītī, both seated side by side. Kubera holds the mangoose purse and the bowl and Hārītī a purse and a child (Fig.198).

On a Paharpur plaque is shown a corpulent figure seated on a lotus in *līlāsana* wearing elaborate amulets and a neck

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lace with a central pendant and big ear-rings. In the right background is a lotus. In his right hand resting on the knee is an indistinct object, which may be *ghata*. In the crest is possibly the figure of Dhyāni-Buddha. This figure may be identified as Jambhala, the god of wealth (Pl. XLVc).

Figures of Tantric Buddhism

Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, has got three interesting clay figurines of unusual types. A figurine from Burartat, Sunderban (24 Pargana), shows a tapering object placed on a round pedestal with a naked woman clasping it in squatting pose. Her hands are raised and clasping the upper part of the tapering object. Her hair like snakes falls behind (*Fig. 199*). Another figurine from Khulna (Bengal) is very much similar to the above. Here instead of a tapering object is a man sitting with his hair falling on the two sides and wearing an ornamented *kulah* cap. The woman in clasping him with her hands at the neck and the legs are passing around the waist of the man. Her forehead is touching the chin of the man. These figurines could not be identified as yet, but appear to be connected with the Tantric form of Buddhism. The latter figurine has been suggested by D. P. Ghosh as Hevajra. These may be dated in the 8 th-10 the century A. D. (*Fig. 200*).

The third figurine in the Asutosh Museum is a Stūpa-like round object placed on a pedestal of three terraces. The upper most terrace appears to be made of round beads. Over this pedestal are shown four figures facing on all the four cardinal points with their squatting legs folded. They have both of their hands clasped together and placed on a *damaru*-like object. Their hair is matted and is arranged in a peak form. Their ears have very big lobes with some object pierced in it. This figurine could not be identified; but it is not unlikely that the Stūpa represents Nāth Yogīs in meditation (*Fig. 201*).

Brahmanical gods and goddesses

Of the complex Brahmanical pantheon, only a few deities are found represented in clay. The few available figures may be described as follows.

BRAHMA. A three-faced head with a top-knot from Śrāvastī is doubtfully identified as Brahmā. The central face has a pointed beard. It probably belongs to the Gupta period.¹ A plaque at Paharpur on the south verandah wall on the first terrace shows Brahmā with the usual three heads, fourth being invisible, seated on a cushioned seat with rosary in the right hand and probably an axe in the left (Pl. XLVb).

VISHNU. The earliest example of a Vishṇu image in clay is probably the torso found at Ahichchhatra wearing *vanamala*, looped round the arms and thighs, short necklaces round the neck, and armlets on the upper arms in the characteristic Kushāṇa style of a framed peacock head (*mayura-keyura*). The extra arms bifurcate from the elbows.² Though there is no attribute preserved still the torso can well be identified as Vishṇu and may be assigned to the end of the Kushāṇa period.

In the Gupta period, we find representations of Vishṇu in the Bhitargaon temple. There he is represented reclining on Śeshanaga, while Brahmā is seated on a lotus, the stalk of which issues from Vishṇu's navel. On another plaque he is shown in his Varāha incarnation. From Mathura we have an interesting plaque depicting four-armed Vishṇu with three faces, two of them being of Varāha and Nṛsiṃha. He has his lower right hand on a male figure with a *chakra* around and the left on a woman (MM2491).³ These male and female figures represent the attributes *chakra* and *gada* in a personified form. This form of representation of the

1. *A. S. L., A. R.*, 1907-8, p. 292.

2. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, p. 127, fig. 90.

3. Mathura Terracottas, p. 35, fig. 55.

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ayudhas is peculiar to this god and to the Gupta period; but a plaque with this representation in clay is also known in the early Pāla period from Sabhar in Dacca district.¹

Nṛsiṃha incarnation of Viṣṇu is represented in a head from Ahichchhatra. It has the face of a lion.² His angry look is indicated by starined brows and tense muscles of the forehead.

The episodes of the life of Rāma and Kṛishṇa, the two other incarnations of Viṣṇu, are represented in some plaques found at various sites. A plaque from Mathura in the Baroda Museum presents the Kāliyadamana episode of Kṛishṇa's life. It is dated in the Kushāṇa period. A few Gupta plaques from Śrāvastī represent the life of Rāma and Kṛishṇa. They have been noticed earlier (*ante* 67-8). These two incarnations are also represented in some of the Paharpur plaques:— a naked boy holding a pitcher on his head with his both hands, accompanied by a man holding an umbrella with one hand and supporting the pitcher with the other (Pl. XLI a.3); a figure snatching pitcher from the hands of a woman (Pl. XXXIXc.3); a boy holding the trunk of a tree on either side (Yamalārjuna scene); a woman churning milk with a child on her side (Yaśoda and Kṛishṇa) are obviously the scenes from the early life of Kṛishṇa. Similarly an ascetic with matted hair holding bow and arrow, sometimes with a quiver or with a tree by his side, may be taken as representing Rāma in exile (Pl. XLVIIIc). On another plaque Rāma and Lakshmaṇa are shown seated as ascetics with a garlanded monkey, probably Sugrīva.

The true representation of Viṣṇu at Paharpur is shown on a single plaque (Pl. XLII d.5). He is shown seated holding *chakra* and *gada* in the upper right and left hands and *sankha* and *padma* in his lower right and left hands respectively.

1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1927-28, p. 112.

2. *Op. cit.*, p. 131, fig. 108.

Ahichchhatra has also yielded some other Vishnu images of later periods, ranging in date from 650 to 1100 A.D.¹

SIVA AND PARVATI. The clay figures of Śiva are known in a number of forms. He is either alone in his various aspects or is represented in the Hara-Gaurī or Umā-Maheśvara form where Śiva is seated with his consort. A type of Śiva and Pārvatī in amorous pose is known as *Ardhanarīvara* wherein half of his body is that of a female. His *liṅga* form is also known in clay.

Beautiful Śaiva heads are known from Ahichchhatra and Rajghat belonging to the Gupta period. The Ahichchhatra heads are described by Dr. V. S. Agrawala.² The Rajghat specimen is in Bharat Kala Bhavan and has a crescent on the hair to left and the third eye on the forehead. These are beautiful specimens of Gupta art. The head of Pārvatī, as the counterpart of Ahichchhatra Śiva head (Fig. 160) is also known from the same site. She has a third eye and a crescent mark on the forehead. (Fig. 161).

Some fragments of a life-size clay figure which is taken with some doubts as Śiva were found in the excavations at Sahet Mahet. The largest fragment was a portion of a bent leg of a seated image which fitted with a left hand holding a lotus bud. An upper portion of an arm was also found there with a very elaborate ornament and remains of drapery. An upper portion of a head with curious locks and frontal eye was also found there. If this head belonged to the image, the image can well be identified with Śiva, but it may be remarked that lotus bud for Śiva is rather unusual.³ These fragments have been dated to the late Kushāṇa or early Gupta period.

1. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, p. 127-128, figs. 91, 93, 95.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 132, fig. 113, 115.

3. A. S. I. R., 1907-8, p. 98.

An emaciated four-armed figure shown on a bas-relief panel of Gupta period from Sahet Mahet and now preserved in Lucknow Museum may be identified as Śiva. The figure has matted locks falling on shoulders. The extra two arms are uplifted and hold a rosary of large beads. Of the lower arms, the right one holds a serpent in the hand, the left one is missing from the elbow. On the forehead there are three lines marking either *tripunda* of wrinkles. The presence of the serpent points to its identification with Śiva although there is no third eye and no other certain attributes. Most likely Śiva is depicted here as a very emaciated yogi engaged in penances. A fruit-tree, probably *udumbari*, is shown in the background (Fig. 187).

In some of the Paharpur plaques, Śiva is shown either as a naked ascetic or clad. In his ascetic form he is shown on a single plaque seated on a lotus (pl. XLIV e). He is holding the spiral shaped staff or *Trisūla* and his third eye is clear. Among the clad figures of Śiva, at least two varieties may be identified on the plaques. In one he is seen standing with a spear in his left hand and garlands of skull (*mundamala*) over the shoulders (Pl. XLI d 2) and his mouth is open. In this form he may be identified as Bhairava. In the other form he is multi-headed with his *ayudhas* in his hands. In this case he may be identified as *panchamukha*, although only three of the heads are visible (Pl. XLIV a). In a plaque a bust is shown with the hair arranged in the form of *jatajuta* on the top of the head and some locks falling on the shoulders. By the third eye in the forehead the figure may be identified as Śiva, but he is wearing a necklace of mango-shaped beads and earrings of two different patterns; as such he has more ornaments than what usually go with Śiva.

The Umā-Maheśvara form of Śiva image in clay is known from Bhita belonging to Gupta period. Śiva and Parvatī are shown facing seated side by side on throne. Śiva's feet are crossed and knees raised above throne. The head is missing.

The legs of Pārvatī hang down (*Fig. 202*). In front of the throne are a bull and a couchant lion with Pārvatī's legs placed on him.

The Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva is rare in sculptures, so is the case in clay. V. S. Agrawala has identified this form on a few heads from Ahichchhatra, Mathura and Rajghat. Such head from Ahichchhatra has a style of coiffure in which the right side consists of matted locks and the left of a mass of spiral curls.¹ The Ardhanārīśvara head from Mathura shows the combination of the matted locks of Śiva and the plaits of Pārvatī's hair fastened by a crest jewel.² About half a dozen heads from Rajghat have got matted locks on the right and hair with spiral curls on the left and thus they present a charming hair style of Ardhanārīśvara.³ A circular plaque from Bhitargaon noticed earlier (*ante 66*) also in all probability represents Ardhanārīśvara. A full figure of Ardhanārīśvara of the Gupta period is in Asutosh Museum which comes from some place in North Bengal. It is fragmentary and the lower portion below the waist is missing and the face is also damaged; but it can be identified as it has got a prominent bust on the left (*Fig 203*).

Liṅga forms of Śiva are extremely rare in clay. An Ekamukhī liṅga is known from Mathura⁴ and two plaques from Paharpur have this form of Śiva. On one the liṅga is represented as a cylindrical object placed on a rectangular *Pīṭha* (pedestal) with the surface decorated with ten garlands (Pl. XXXIX f. 1). The other is a Chaumukha, three of the four faces being shown in the plaque on the top of the cylindrical shaft, placed on a broad circular pedestal (Pl. LVle).

The plaques that have been found in the Śiva temple at Ahichchhatra (c. 450-650 A. D.) are interesting for their

1. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, fig. 117.

2. Mathura Terracottas, fig. 57.

3. V. S. Agrawala, in *Nagari Pracharini Patrika*, Vol. XLV, p. 221.

4. Mathura Terracottas, fig. 56.

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subjects relating to Śiva's life. His exploits as gathered from the surviving specimens of these plaques reveal a full-fledged developement of Śaivite mythology. They illustrate, for example, the theme of his destroying the sacrifice of his father-in-law Dakṣa Prajāpati, the holocaust wrought there by his playful gaṇas, his assumption of the terrific form of Bhairava, his peripatetic aspect with the begging bowl in hand, his *urdhvaretas* form as Lakulīśa, his dalliances with Pārvatī in the renewed marital life, and finally his reposeful ascetic form as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, the lord of *yoga* and divine wisdom. Dr. Agrawala has pointed out that from the study of the specimens it appears that the iconography of the figures was quite elastic during the formative period of Paurāṇic Hinduism.¹

PARVATI WITH SKANDA AND GANESA. Besides the heads and the figures of Umā-Maheśvara, Pārvatī is shown in clay as mother also. A panel from Mathura shows Pārvatī sitting with Skanda in her lap. She is sitting on lion (Fig. 193). An almost life-size figure from Katia, now in Lucknow Museum, has been identified showing Pārvatī with her two sons Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa engaged in a lively scramble for sweet-balls. The image is broken and only lower portion survives.

GANESA. A number of plaques found at Rajghat show Gaṇeśa in his well known iconographic form and belong to the later Gupta period. A Gaṇeśa figure has also been found at Bangarh in the Gupta stratum although its style is that of the Pāla period. Here the trunk of Gaṇeśa is turned towards the right, a feature which was not ordinarily current in contemporary Bengal art². Several plaques represent Gaṇeśa at Paharpur, but the most striking is that in which he is shown in dancing pose (*Nritya-Ganese*) (Pl. XLIVd).

1. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, p. 167-8.

2. K. G. Goswami, *Excavations at Bangarh*, p. 17, Pl. xx. 1.

An interesting plaque of the Gupta period from Bhitargaon representing Gaṇeśa is described earlier (*ante* 66).

KARTTIKEYA. Kārttikeya, the god of war, was very favourite in the Gupta period. We have some representations of this god in clay wherein he is shown riding on his peacock Parvaṇi. These specimens are known from Mathura (MM 629; 2793), Ahichchhatra¹ and Rajghat. Mathura Museum has got a bust of Kārttikeya, found at Ahichchhatra, wherein he is shown with his *Sakti* (Fig. 204).

SURYA. Thirteen fragmentary plaques representing Sūrya were found at Ahichchhatra, eleven from the same stratum proving that the iconographical form furnished by them prevailed there between 450 and 750 A. D. These plaques are circular with the upper half occupied by the deity and the lower half by an array of seven horses. The horses are shown erect on their hind legs, the one in the centre is treated frontally and three on each side shown in their quarter profile. The sun-god and his attendants stand on the chariot. Its single wheel is shown between the hind legs of the middle horse. Above the horses' head is a raised platform serving as the seat of the deity. In front of the sun-god is his charioteer Aruṇa. On the right and left stand Ushā and Pratyushā (or Rājñī and Nikshubhā) holding bow stretched in the attitude of shooting. A little below them are attendant Nāga figures, one on each side of the horses. Thus a full-fledged iconographic formula is presented in these plaques.² But an important feature in these plaques is the absence of Daṇḍa and Piṅgala which is inexplicable.

A fragmentary plaque from this very site shows only the seven horses frontally (Fig. 205). A fragment from Mathura also shows the seven horses (Fig. 206).

1. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, p. 131, fig. 109.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 128-130.

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Another type of representation of Sun image in post-Gupta period is known from Paharpur. There he is identified on a loose plaque having the god seated with halo, holding in both upraised hands full blown lotuses. The boot in the legs and the way in which the legs are shown remind us of the Bodhgaya railing and other early representations.

A third, but symbolic representation of Sūrya is depicted in a terracotta panel, which was found fixed in a temple wall at village Lachhimipur, near Ahichchhatra. Here Sūrya is shown by a prominent orb placed against the rectangular frame of a chariot moving on one wheel. Standing inside are seven female figures with right hand in *abhaya-mudra*, most probably the solar rays shown as 'seven sisters'. The plaque is unique of its kind.¹

AGNI. Agni, the god of fire, is known in clay from a single specimen from Ahichchhatra. There he is shown as a two-armed male figure with a halo at the back of the head and an aura of flames (*prabhavali*) all round the body. This image belongs to sixth or seventh century A. D.²

KUBERA. Kubera, the god of wealth, is known in clay art from a number of specimens from Rajghat, Kauśāmbī, Ahichchhatra and Mathura, holding a purse in his left hand. He is generally slightly pot-bellied (*Fig. 207*).

KAMADEVA. Mathura has produced a few clay figures depicting Kāmadeva, the god of love. According to the Indian mythology, his chief attributes are the bow of sugar-cane and five arrows (*pañchaśara*). His two types are known. In one he is shown with wings (MM 2849; 3037) and in the other without them (MM 2552; 2557) (*Fig. 208-9*).

GANGA AND YAMUNA. In the Bhitargaon temple, on the two sides of the porch are the representations of the

1. Ahichchhatra, *Terracottas*, p. 106, pl. XLI, fig. 106.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 131, fig. 107.

goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā. They have been described earlier (ante 65). At Ahichchhatra, almost life-size clay images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā stood on the two sides of the staircase leading to the three-terraced Śiva temple. Gaṅgā stands on her vehicle *makara* and Yamunā on tortoise.¹

DURGA. A round plaque from Sahet-Mahet, now in Lucknow Museum, shows inside a lotus medallion the figure of two-armed goddess namely Durgā seated on her lion, holding a trisūla in left hand and right hand in *varada-mudrā*. The vertical third eye is shown on the forehead. She is wearing a twisted necklet, a string of pearls, beaded girdle, armlets and anklets (*Fig. 188*). It belongs to Gupta period.

MAHISHASURAMARDINI. The goddess Durgā subduing Mahishāsura (the buffalo-demon) is known as Mahishāsūramardīnī and is also called Kātyāyīnī. Twenty specimens of this form of goddess have been found at Ahichchhatra and they furnish us valuable information about the iconographic developement of this goddess. The evidence of the stratification shows that the goddess made her first appearance in the period 450-550 A. D. and continued throughout. It enjoyed the highest popularity between 550-750 A. D. We find first the goddess standing with four hands, later on increased to six and eight. She is seen engaged in subduing a buffalo standing on its hind legs with head lifted in front of the goddess and body stretched across her legs. In two upper arms the goddess holds attributes; her lower hand is placed on the back of the animal and the left swung around the neck in an attitude betraying affection rather than terror.² A few four-armed Kātyāyīnī figurines are also known from Mathura and Rajghat. Mathura figurines have

1. *Ibid.*, p. 133. These figures are in the National Museum, New Delhi.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 133, figs. 120-124.

been attributed to Kushāṇa period, but since they are very much similar to Ahichchhatra figurines, they may be of the Gupta period (*Fig. 210-11*).

CHAMUNDA. The goddess Chāmunda is represented in clay in two specimens from Ahichchhatra. In one she is seated on a high pedestal and is distinguished by her emaciated body and pendent breasts. Two corpses are thrown in the front and left sides of the pedestal. This represents her *pretavahana* form. A nude figure of a young boy on her left shares the pedestal. The arms of another figure carried on her back are also visible in front (*Fig. 168*). The other figure is a torso showing her emaciated ribs, pendent breasts and sunken belly. The noteworthy feature of this figure is the representation of scorpions and lizards on the exposed ribs of the goddess as a mark of her horrid aspect.² Here it would not be out of place to point out to a female figurine of the Kushāṇa period from Kauśāmbī. It is a crude specimen holding a baby in her left arm. Over her right arm is seen a crawling scorpion.¹ This female figurine is not emaciated so she cannot be identified as Chāmunda still the presence of scorpion on the body suggests some connection with her.

NAIGAMESA. A large number of male and female figurines have been found at various sites like Mathura, Ahichchhatra and Rajghat which have an animal face with goat-like features and long dangling ears having either pierced holes or slit-marks. The mouth is indicated below a hooked nose by a deep cut slit. The projecting simple topknot is also pierced with one or two holes. The arms extend obliquely from the shoulders and the hands, all without details of fingers, are indicated simply by a spoon-like depression. The same feature occurs in the feet. Some female figurines have been found with all the above

1. *Ibid.*, p. 132-3, fig. 118, 118a.

2. *Kala, Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 22, pl. VIII A.

features but the goat face is replaced by the human face. V. S. Agrawala has suggested that the goat-like head connects them with the god Hariṇaigameśa, who was invoked as the presiding deity of child-birth and was considered to be another form of Skanda under the name of Naigameya. He identifies his female counterpart with Shashṭhī, the consort of Skanda, who, as guardian goddess of child-birth, was the subject of universal worship.¹

MULTI-HEADED GODDESS. Ahichchhatra has produced about 38 female figurines with three heads arranged frontally in a row, with two arms bent at the elbow and the hands placed on the knees; holding a cup in the left and an elongated object tapering below in the right. Some of these figurines have a child seated on the left thigh and clasps the mother near her breast or is squatting with its legs stretched on the pedestal between the feet of its mother. The breasts are prominently indicated with pointed nipples. The three heads, an unusual feature, cannot be connected with other known specimens, nor literary texts throw light on it. V. S. Agrawala suggests that the goddess appears to be a Brahmanical counterpart of the Buddhist Hārītī, as she holds a cup and a purse-like object and is often associated with a child. The front three heads permit the inference of a similar row at the back omitted in the frontal view. As such the goddess can be identified with Shashṭhī.²

Semi-divine and semi-human figures

A number of semi-divine and semi-human figures also form part of the productions of the ancient clay artists. They are as follows :—

WINGED FIGURES. Certain winged male and female figurines datable to Śuṅga period have been found at Basarh,

1. Agrawala, *Ahichchhatra Terracottas*, p. 134-5, fig. 125-133. Also, "The God Naigamesa," *J. U. P. H. S.*, x, p. 68-73.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 171-4.

Lauriya Nandangarh and Kausāmbī. A female winged figurine was first discovered at Basarh.¹ For long no other figurine of that type was known. Then another figurine was discovered in the excavations at Lauriya Nandangarh.² But Kausāmbī has yielded in recent days a number of plaques representing male figurines with wings.³ Ever since the discovery of the Basarh female figurine, wearing wings and standing amidst lotus shrubs and creepers, many speculations have been made about its origin and identification. Marshall thought the wings very remarkable and suggested Mesopotamian influence in their schematic treatment. He took the figurine a potential Persian document. He writes, "It is not the sort of thing that travels, it was in all probability manufactured on the spot. This would seem to involve direct Persian influence in Mauryan times at what is now at Basarh."⁴ Coomaraswamy pointed out the extreme paucity of such figurines in Indian art. Besides the Basarh figurine, he had the knowledge of bronze winged figurine found at Akhun Dheri⁵ and stone relief of a winged female figure from Mathura⁶, both belonging to Kushāṇa period. He suggested the Basarh figurine, for its being standing on lotus, as the goddess Śrī⁷. But since we have now male figurines of the same type associated with lotus creepers, we cannot identify the female figurine as Śrī. Indian mythology is full of references of flying celestials, such as Gandharvas, Apsarās, Suparṇas, Vidyādhara and such male figures appear on Bharhut railings.

1. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1913-14, pl. XLIV.

2. *Ibid.*, 1935-6, pl. XII, fig. h.

3. S. C. Kela, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, p. 27. Bharat Kala Bhavan has also a few such figurines from Kausambi.

4. *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1913-14, p. 115-16.

5. *Ibid.* 1922-23, pl. Xb.

6. Smith, *Jain Stūpa of Mathura*, pl. xviii.

7. *IPEK*, p. 71.

VIDYADHARAS. A Gupta terracotta panel from Mathura (MM 2824) shows a male figure, probably Vidyadhara, poised in air and flying to right with a full-vase (*Purnaghata*) in his hand brimming with leaves and flowers. The figure wears a short loin-cloth, ear-rings, bangles and a single pearl-necklace. The hair is beautifully arranged in locks. In a number of plaques from Paharpur, they are shown flying either singly (*Pl. XLVIIb*) or with Vidyadharis, their female counterpart (*Pl. XLVIIc*). Their legs are invariably shown as turned upward in the act of flight, their head is braided and the body appears to be floating in the space. They hold a sword and a noose (*Pl. XLVIIf*), or lotus, or more commonly, a garland. A plaque on first terrace verandah shows a Gandharva holding a broken necklace in his hand, the pearls or beads have fallen down on the floor (*Pl. XLVIIb*).

KINNARA-MITHUNA. Kinnaras are mythologically heavenly beings famous for their melodious songs. Their two kinds are described in literature, one with human head joined to an equestrian body and the other with horse's head joined to a human body. Both the forms are known to Indian art, but the clay artists illustrate only the first form, depicting pairs of romantic lovers, a human being riding over a striding horse with a human face. Such clay figurines have been found at Rajghat, Mathura and Abichchhatra. The Rajghat specimen is a hollow round plaque, which is like a flattened casket closed on all sides. On one side of it is depicted Kinnari (i.e. horse with the female bust) striding to right and Kinnara (male) is riding over her with a bunch of leaves and fruits in his right hand. His left hand is behind the Kinnari (*Fig. 212*). He is wearing dhoti, a necklace and a simple headdress. Kinnari is facing with folded hands, wearing a girdle on her waist; her neck and hair are well decorated. The plaque is decorated with a

beaded border.¹ The low relief and the flat frontal effect, which are the distinguishing features of the Śunga art, find full expression in the workmanship of this piece. This is in the Bharat Kala Bhavan.

On the Mathura Museum piece, the Kinnari is striding to left and the Kinnara and Kinnari are in *alingana* pose. Below the horse is seen a dwarfish figure. This also belongs to Śunga period* (*Fig. 213*). From Ahichchhatra, we have three specimens of Kinnara-mithuna. Two of them are fragmentary. One is a rimmed moulded disc showing the pair striding to right. Only lower portion is seen and appears to be very late in date. The other is a plaque with flat base, bearing on both sides the same scene of Kinnara-mithuna. The plaque is broken but the anklet round the foot of the rider shows that the figure riding on the horse was female and the horse might be having the head of a male. This belongs to sixth-seventh century A.D. The third specimen is a big square architectural bas-relief plaque in the best traditions of the Gupta art and formed part of the frieze of the Śiva temple.³

NAGAS. The cult of Nagas is known since hoary antiquity. Clay figurines of Nagas are found at various sites. In their simplest form the Nagas are shown with a raised hood and broad hips with stump like legs. The head of these figurines is slightly curved and scales are marked on it, round eyes are indicated by applied rings of clay; on the hips is found a row of rings, which probably represents the girdle.⁴ This form is known from many sites. But in actual

1. Rai Krishnadass, Kinnara-mithuna, *J.U.P.H.S.*, Vol. XV, pt. 1, p. 43-44; Agrawala, Rajghat Terracottas, *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. IX, p. 10, pl. II. 4.

2. Mathura Terracottas, p. 32, fig. 37

3. Ahichchhatra Terracottas, p. 162-63, fig. 263, 264, 303.

4. S. C. Kala, *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*, pl. xxiv; *J.I.S.O.A.*, vol. VII, fig. 12.

serpent form, some specimens were found at Rajgir.¹ S. C. Kala has described two serpent hoods from Kauśāmbī². In human form Nāga images are known from various places. From Kauśāmbī we have a female with a Nāga-hood over head. In the collection of R. C. Tandon is a plaque in which a female figure is shown standing with coils of serpents rising up on her sides. From Ahichchhatra three specimens of Nāga figures are known all of late period. One of them has a canopy of seven and the other of three snake-hoods.³ A five-hooded female Nāga figure of Kushāṇa period is known from Mathura (MM 2334) (*Fig. 214*).⁴

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1. *A. S. I., A. R.*, 1935-36, p. 53-54, pl. xvi b.

2. Kala *Terracotta figurines from Kauśāmbī*, p. 36.

3. *Ahichchhatra Terracottas*, p. 131, fig. 110.

4. *Mathura Terracottas*, p. 33, fig. 46.

APPENDIX I

TERRACOTTA-YIELDING SITES OF THE GANGETIC VALLEY

Following are some of the places that have yielded terracotta figurines from time to time and by their evidence help in judging the scope of the clay art in the Gangetic valley. This list, however, is by no means exhaustive.

AHICHCHHATRA (U. P.). Ahichchhatra is situated 20 miles west of Bareilly, about seven miles to the north of Aonla railway station between Bareilly and Aligarh, and about half a mile to the north-east of the village of Ramnagar in the Bareilly district. It was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Uttara Panchala. Excavations were carried out by the Archaeological Department from 1940 to 1944 and a large number of clay figurines were then found. V. S. Agrawala has published a detailed study of these figurines in *Ancient India* (No. 4). Another excavation was carried out there in 1963-64 and in that excavation only animal figures were found in Period I (P. G. Ware) and animal and human both types of figures in the subsequent periods (*I. A.*, 1963-64, p. 43-44).

ALIGARH (U. P.). A clay figurine of a woman in adoration is in Mathura Museum (MM 2870 D) belonging to Gupta period. It is said to have come from Aligarh.

ATRANJIKHERA (ETAH, U. P.). Various types of terracotta figurines were found in excavations (*I. A.*, 1960-61 to 1967-68).

ANTICHAK (BHAGALPUR, BIHAR). In an excavation, an exposed Stupa revealed terracotta plaques on its second terrace representing various aspects of Buddha, a lady engaged in toilet, a female attendant massaging the

legs of her mistress, Ardhanārīśvara and animals like lion, horse, deer, parrot, etc. (*I. A.*, 1964-65, p. 5).

ALAMGIRPUR (MEERUT, U. P.). In Excavations, in Period I (Harappan) a fragmentary body of a bull and representations of snake were found. In Period II (Grey Ware) were discovered wheeled terracotta toys representing bull and ram beautifully finished with incised strokes on the body (*I. A.*, 1958-59, p. 52).

BAIGRAM (Bengal). A headless male figure of Kushāṇa period from this place is in Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University.

BAIRAT (U. P.). Bairat is a village in pargana Bara of Tahsil Chandauli, in the district of Varanasi about 16 miles to the north-east from Varanasi and is situated on the south-east bank of a loop-shaped river channel, known as the Banganga, which is in all probability some old bed or back water of the Gaṅgā. This is an ancient site and a number of terracotta figurines from this place are collected in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University.

BALIRAJGARH (DARBHANGA, BIHAR). Śuṅga terracotta plaque figurines were found in a small scale excavation at this site (*I. A.*, 1962-63, p. 5).

BANGARH (Bengal). The ancient city of Koṭivarsha, which was the seat of a district (*Vishaya*) in the Paundravardhana province (*bhukti*) in the Gupta period, is now represented by the extensive mounds of Bangarh, about 16 miles from Dinajpur (Bengal). As early as 1921-22 a terracotta figurine was picked up by K. N. Dikshit belonging to early Pala period (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1921-22, p. 84, pl. XXXX b). The Calcutta University had an excavation at this site from 1937 to 1941. There a large number of terracotta figurines ranging from the Śuṅga period to the Pala period were found. They are described in the report entitled *Excavations at Bangarh*.

BANSI (BASTI, U. P.). Many terracotta figures were

found during an exploration expedition (*I. A.*, 1962-63, p. 33).

BASARH (Bihar). Basarh is situated 18 miles north of Hajipur in Muzaffarpur district. It represents the ancient site of *Vaisali*, the capital of the Lichchhavis. Archaeological excavations were taken up in 1903-4 by Bloch, in 1913-14 by Spooner and by Altekar and his associates in 1949-50. The first two excavations are reported in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-4 (p. 97-98) and 1913-14 (p. 155-183) respectively; the report of the third excavation is published under the title *Excavations at Vaisali*. Large number of terracottas have been found in all these excavations.

BASTI (U. P.). A number of clay figurines in the Indian Museum (Ba 4, 7, 8, 10; NS 4273) and National Museum (222, 223) are said to have come from various old sites in the Basti district. They were collected by the late Shri Amarnath Shukla, Secretary, Sakhyan Archaeological Society, Basti.

BHADOHI (U. P.). Bhadohi is a village, about three miles from Harsuni railway station on Lucknow-Kanpur line. Big heads of post-Gupta period were discovered at this place; they are in Lucknow Museum.

BHAINSA (BASTI, U. P.). Terracotta figures were found in an exploration (*I. A.*, 1962-63, p. 33).

BHITA (U. P.). Bhita is a small village in Tahsil Karchhana in Allahabad district, 11 miles south-west of Allahabad. The excavation by John Marshall in 1911-12 had yielded a large number of terracotta figurines, which are described in the Archaeological report (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1911-12; p. 71-80).

BHITARGAON (U. P.). Bhitargaon is a village in Tahsil Narwal in Kanpur district, 20 miles south of Kanpur. There is a brick temple of the late Gupta period, which is the only surviving example of that period. The exterior

of the temple is decorated with numerous terracotta bas-relief panels, which are exquisite examples of Gupta art.

BHUILADIH (U. P.). Bhuiladih is a deserted ancient site situated on a lake called Bhuilatal in the pargana Mansurnagar in the district of Basti, about 15 miles north-west from the headquarters. Carlleyle has identified this place with Kapilavastu, the capital of the Śakyas. In 1874—75, while excavating a mound at this place he found a well which yielded a large number of terracotta figurines of various sizes. Some of them were fragments of large clay-statues. He described some of them in these words :—

"These terracotta figurines are evidently very ancient, and some of them are very curious. One, in particular, of a female, of which the head and bust only remain, about one-fifth of life size, has the face wrinkled into a broad grin, as if laughing heartily. Another is the figure of a man or woman sitting on a high stool, with the feet placed downwards on the ground, just as an European would sit on a chair. This figure wears a kind of coat which reaches down to the knees. The hands rest on the knees, and the right hand holds some object like a bottle, while the left hand holds cup or bowl. Unfortunately the head of this figure had been broken off and could not be found.¹ But perhaps the most important of these terracotta figurines is the half of a small figure of Buddha, down to the waist, nearly five inches in its present height, and which must, therefore, originally have been about 10 or 11 inches in its entire height. The hair is represented as either longer than in the conventional statues of Buddha but it is also gathered up into the characteristic Buddhistical conical knot on the top of the head. Another, though, now much broken and disfigured, had originally been an exceedingly well formed

1. The description of the figure resembles very much with that of the headless male figure found at Ahichchhatra and is described by Dr. Agrawala (*Terracotta figurines of Ahichchhatra*, fig. 305, p. 173).

head and face, with parts of the shoulders of a female, about 1/5 of life size, and wearing enormous solid circular earrings in the lower lobes of the ear. I have a strong suspicion that this may be the remains of a statue of Mayadevi. I think, moreover, that it is very possible that some, or even many, of the ancient statues at Kapilvastu may after all have been made of terracotta and not of stone at all" (C.A.S.R., vol. XII, p. 162-3).

BILSAD (U. P.). Bilsad is a small village in Tahsil Aliganj of Etah district, 37 miles north-east of Etah, 2½ miles south-east of Rudain railway station (N. E. R.). Cunningham identifies this place with Pi-lo-sha-na mentioned by Hiuen-Tsiang. He had obtained some terracotta architectural bas-relief panels from this place; three of them were illustrated by him in his report (C.A.S.R., Vol. XI, pl. VIII).

BULANDSAHAR (U. P.). A terracotta female figurine found in the ruins at Bulandsahar is described and illustrated by F. S. Growse (*J. A. S. B.*, Vol. LII, pt. I, p. 270-88).

BUXAR (BIHAR). Buxar is an important town in the district of Shahabad situated on the bank of Gaṅgā. An excavation of a portion of the extensive mound on the bank of the river was taken up by A. Banerjee-Sastri in 1927. It yielded a large number of terracottas, which are interesting and constitute a local variety. Banerjee-Sastri published his report under a very misleading title "REMAINS OF A PRE-HISTORIC CIVILIZATION IN THE GANGETIC VALLEY" in the *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society*, Vol. III (p. 187-91) and *K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume*. The figurines found there actually belong to Śuṅga period.

In a subsequent, more scientific excavation, conducted in 1963-64, terracotta human figures of archaic type having incised eyes, pinched nose and ear-lobes and perforation over head were discovered in Period I (pre-N. B. P.); moulded

female figures were found in Period II (N. B. P. layers) and human figures with Kushāna head-dress in Period III (early centuries of Christian era) (*I. A.*, 1963-64, p. 8-9). A large number of figurines had been obtained from the bed of the river by a private collector at Buxar.

CHANDRAKETUGARH (West Bengal). Chandraketurgarh is a prolific site for terracotta figurines. A large number of such figurines are collected in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University. Most of them were collected during exploration expeditions; later excavations carried out there brought out many interesting moulded terracotta figurines.

CHIRAND (SARAN, BIHAR). Human heads and animal terracotta figurines were found in excavations carried out here during 1962-63 in the layers of Period I (600-300 B. C.). Human figurines with markedly foreign traditions of Kushāna period, *Saptamatrikas* and *Naigamesha* were found in the layers attributed to 100 B. C.—250 A. D. (*I. A.*, 1962-63, p. 6, 1964-65, pl. VIII).

DIGHWA (BASTI, U. P.). Some terracotta figures were found in exploration (*I. A.*, 1962-63, p. 33).

CHANDISTHANA (BIHAR). Chandisthan is a village near Piprakothi in Bettiah, Champaran. Some post-Gupta heads with tenon were found here by Ganesh Chaube of Piprakothi.

CHAUSA (BIHAR). Chausa is a village in Shahabad district. A terracotta panel, depicting Rāmāyana scene was found there and is now in Patna Museum. It has been published and described by K. P. Jayaswal (*Modern Review*, Vol. LII, p. 148-150). Some more terracotta figurines from the site are in a private collection at Buxar.

COMMILLA (BENGAL). Commilla is a district town in East Bengal. A Dhyānī-Buddha terracotta plaque of 10th-11th century A. D. from this district is in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University.

FARUKHABAD (U. P). A headless Buddha figure in the Bharat Kala Bhavan is said to have come from Farukhabad (Fatehgarh) district. A *Suka-krida* female figurine in Mathura Museum is from the Vihara mound in this district. It is illustrated and described by Dr. Agrawala (Mathura Terracottas, fig. 30).

GARHWA (U. P). Garhwa is situated amongst the low scattered spurs of the Kaimur hills, in Tahsil Bara of Allahabad district, 25 miles south-west of Allahabad and six miles north-west of Sheorajpur railway station (N. R.). A number of terracotta bas-relief panels were found there by Cunningham (C. A. S. R., Vol. III, p. 53).

GAYA (BIHAR). Gaya or Bodhgaya is the well known place in Bihar where Buddha had his enlightenment. Some terracotta plaques of the post-Gupta period are known from this place in the Indian Museum and the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta.

GHOSI (U. P). Ghosi is a small town, railway station (N. E. R.) and tahsil headquarters of the same name in Azamgarh district about 24 miles north-east of Azamgarh. There is an extensive high mound near the town. Near this mound, in 1935—36 Rameshwara Dayal, the then sub-divisional officer of Ghosi had found heaps of terracotta figurines, which were accumulated at one place by the villagers, who in turn had found them in their fields in course of ploughing. Selected specimens of these terracottas were later distributed to various museums; they are known in the Indian Museum (Calcutta), Lucknow Museum, Allahabad Museum and Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras. Some of the figurines of the Lucknow Museum were published by Dr. V. S. Agrawala (J. U. P. H. S., Vol. X, pt. I, p. 59-64). Nine specimens from Indian Museum are described by T. N. Ramachandran (A. S. I., A. R., 1935—36, p. 118—119). Agrawala has attributed the figurines to the Kushāṇa period, but Ramachandran places some of them to the Śuṅga period.

GITGRAM (BENGAL). Gitgram is a village in Kandi sub-division of Murshidabad district. A number of figurines of Gupta and earlier periods were found there (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1928-29, p. 93). A few specimens from this site are in Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, and some of them are published (*Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika*, Vol. XXXV, p. 110-114; XLII, p. 210-13).

GOKUL (BENGAL). Gokul is a village near Mahasthan in Bogra district. In an excavation a number of terracotta bas-relief panels were found with floral patterns and human and animal figures (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1935-36, p. 68-69). These panels have been identified by N. G. Majumdar as typical Gupta, he assigned them the date of 6th-7th century A. D., but they are akin to Paharpur panels.

GUDANAPUR (U. P.). This is a village between Kanpur and Mainpuri. The exact location is not known. A Gupta clay bas-relief panel was found there and is now in the Indian Museum (No. 5176/8.9.2.82). It shows a female figure with both hands raised up and clasped together.

HASTINAPUR (U. P.). Hastinapur is an old town in Mawana tahsil of Meerut district, 22 miles to the north-east of Meerut. It is said that it is the ancient site of the capital of the Pandavas of Mahabharata. In the excavations carried there in 1951-52, some terracotta figurines were found. Of them a figure of Bodhisattva is interesting.

INDORE (U. P.). Indore or Indorekhera is a small village situated on the right bank of Choya river, about 8 miles to the south-west of Anupshahr in Bulandshahr district. In 1874-75 Carlyle had found there a number of clay figurines, which included male and female figures, a figure of an elephant with a man riding on it and some small figures of animals. He has described three or four of them. He noticed on some of them Indo-Scythian or Indo-Scythic imitation of Grecian art (*C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XII, p. 48-49).

He has also described a large figure of bull from Kundanapur, a mound in its vicinity, which measured 1 foot 7 inches in length and 1 foot in height. This bull was adorned with human heads and bells suspended alternately like a fringe (*ibid.*, p. 74).

JAJMAU (Kanpur, U. P.). Terracotta figurines with applied headdress, pinched nose and slit eyes have been found here in an excavation associated with Grey Ware. (*I. A.*, 1950-57, p. 49).

JHUSI (Allahabad, U. P.). Human and animal terracotta figures were found during an exploration carried out by a member of the Banaras Hindu University in 1961 (*I. A.*, 1961-62, p. 52). Some figurines from this site are in the Allahabad Museum.

KANAUJ (U. P.). Post-Sunga terracotta figurines are reported from Kanauj (*I. A.*, 1955-56, p. 19).

JOWRIDIH (Bihar). Jowridih is situated about 12 miles from Hajipur on road to Muzaffarpur. An excavation was undertaken by Lincke, an executive engineer of the Tirhut State Railway during the last century. Among other objects, fragments of clay figurines of horses were found in the excavation (*C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XVI, p. 88).

KANPUR (U. P.). A unique clay-modelled figurine of the late Gupta period, probably a surgical model, showing the intestine, is in Allahabad Museum and is said to have come from Kanpur (*J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. XXI, p. 133, fig. 10).

KARIAN (Darbhanga, Bihar). Terracottas belonging to quite later period were discovered here (*I. A.*, 1954-55, p. 26).

KASIA (U. P.). Kasia (Kusinagar) is situated 37 miles east of Gorakhpur in Deoria district and is the place of Buddha's Nirvana. A number of terracotta Buddha figures have been found there during excavations.

KAUSAMBI (U. P.). Kausambi, better known to people as Kosam, is situated on the north bank of Yamunā in pargana Karari of Manjhanpur Tahsil in Allahabad district, 23 miles west of Allahabad. It is the site of the capital of ancient Vatsa. It is a prolific site for the clay figurines. Hundreds of them are found by the villagers during the rains and the ploughing season. Quite a big collection of these figurines is in the Allahabad Museum, Lucknow, Banaras and Patna Museums also have figurines from this place. Majority of the figurines belong to the Śuṅga period and a few relate to the Kushāṇa period. Gupta figurines are extremely rare. S. C. Kala has published a monograph on them entitled *Terracotta figurines from Kausambi*. Excavation is being carried out there by the Allahabad University since 1953. It has yielded many figurines, which are deposited in the Museum of Allahabad University and are mentioned in the *Excavation Reports* and noticed in the *I. A.* (1953-54 onwards).

KHULNA (BENGAL). Khulna is a town in Bengal. An interesting figurine from this place is in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University.

LAURIYA NANDANGARH (BIHAR). Lauriya Nandangarh is a large village situated some 16 miles to the north-west of Betiah in Champaran district, at the meeting point of two of the principal routes that lead to Nepal border. The beautiful lion-pillar of Aśoka is situated in its vicinity. A large number of terracotta figurines were found in the excavations there, which are mostly Śuṅga (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1935-36, p. 64-65).

MAHASTHAN (BENGAL). Mahasthan or Mahasthangarh is situated about 8 miles north of the headquarters of Bogra district. It has been identified as the ancient site of Paundravardhana, the capital of Varendra country or North Bengal. A number of terracotta bas-relief panels were found at this place along with some other figurines

(*C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XV, p. 108-9, pl. XXXI; *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1928-29, p. 96; 1930-34, p. 128-29).

MAINAMATI (BENGAL). Mainamati is a village six miles west of Comilla in Tippera district. A number of bas-relief panels, like those of Paharpur were found at a number of sites in its vicinity, which are described by T.N. Ramachandran (*B. C. Law Volume*, part II, p. 213-231).

MANJHI (BIHAR). Manjhi is a village and railway station on Ballia-Chapra line (N. E. R.) on the bank of Ghaghra, in Chapra district. Some terracottas found at the extensive mound on the bank of the river, belonging to Gupta period, were seen by me with a resident of the village.

MASON (GHAZIPUR, U. P.). Mason or Masondih is situated on the north bank of Ganga, 4½ miles to the south-west of Bhitari of Skandagupta pillar fame, 24 miles west of Ghazipur in Ghazipur district. Clay figurines from this site are noticed in *C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XXII (p. 105). A number of terracotta figurines, collected from this site, are in Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras. Excavations carried out at this site during 1964-65, yielded Śuṅga style figurines from Period II (200-100 B. C.), human figurines from the layers of Period III (100-200 A. D.) and Gupta style terracottas from the stratum of Period IV (200-600 A. D.) (*I. A.*, 1964-65, p. 42, pl. XXXVI).

MATHURA (U. P.). Mathura is one of the oldest towns of India and figures in history as early as the *Mahabharata*. The modern town and its vicinity is full of ancient mounds, but no excavation was ever taken up. The terracotta figurines that are known are mostly picks from various sites of this town. They are collected in the Mathura Museum, Lucknow Museum, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, Patna Museum, Indian Museum and Baroda Museum. Some figurines are also in Boston Museum (U. S. A.) and Budapest Museum (Hungary). Coomaraswamy wrote

on the Mathura terracottas on the basis of collection in the Boston Museum. Some of the figurines in Mathura Museum are described in the hand-books and the Catalogue of the Museum compiled by Vogel, Agrawala and M. M. Nagar. Agrawala had also published a detailed account of 60 figurines in an article entitled "Mathura Terracottas" (*J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. IX, pt. II, p. 6—38). Further acquisitions of the clay figurines of Mathura Museum are noticed in several articles and Museum's Annual report. The Patna Museum collection of Mathura terracottas is described in *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities*.

NALANDA (BIHAR). Nalanda, the site of famous Buddhist monastery, is situated in the district of Patna. The colossal clay images are known from here.

NEWAL (U. P.). Newal is an old ruined mound, 2 miles north of Bangar Mau, 20 miles south-west of Kanauj, in district of Unao. Several clay figurines were collected from the mounds of this site by Cunningham (*C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XI, p. 47—53). Some clay figurines from this site are published in *J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 175—188.

PAHARPUR (BENGAL). Paharpur is situated in Rajshahi district. Big Buddhist temple of the Pala period was discovered there which has on the exterior wall terracotta bas-relief panels. These bas-reliefs have been described by K. N. Dikshit in his *Excavations at Paharpur*.

PANDUR AJAR DIBI (BURDWAN, BENGAL). In excavations hand-modelled terracottas were found (*I. A.*, 1962—63, p. 43, pl. LXXXIV).

PATALIPUTRA (BIHAR). Pataliputra (modern Patna) is known in the history of clay art for the figurines that have been found in the excavations at Kumrahar, a village situated on the south very close to the city, and Bulandibagh (four miles east of Patna), and also in a trench digging, which crossed most of the length of the

city. Most of them are in Patna Museum and are described in *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities*.

RAJABADI-DANGA (MURSHIDABAD, BENGAL). Terracotta figurines datable to the third-fourth century A. D. have been found here (*I. A.*, 1962—63, p. 43).

RAJGHAT (VARANASI, U. P.). Rajghat is an extensive mound situated on the west bank of the Ganga on the north skirt of Banaras town. In 1939 some diggings were made by the railway authorities in course of the extension of Kashi railway station. It brought to light a large number of terracotta figurines along with other antiquities. Most of these terracotta figurines are in Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University. A few of them have found place in the Lucknow, National and Allahabad Museums. Some of them were noticed by Dr. Agrawala. Excavations carried out by the Banaras Hindu University during 1957—64 have also yielded human and animal figurines in the layers datable to 6th to 3rd century B. C. (*I. A.*, 1957—58, p. 50, 1964—65, pl. XXXVIII).

RAJGIR (Bihar). Rajgir is the ancient Rajagriha, the capital of ancient Magadha, and is situated in the district of Patna. A number of clay figurines were found during the excavations at Maniyar Math and they included serpents of different varieties, animal figurines and some human male and female figurines (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1933-36, p. 53-54). Some figurines from this site are in Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta. In an excavation at the new fort site in 1951-52, human terracotta figures were found in the layers datable to the Mauryan period (*I. A.*, 1961-62, p. 7-8).

RAMPURWA (Bihar). Rampurwa is situated some 20 miles north-west of Lauriya Nandangarh, 25 miles due north from Bettiah in Champaran district. A few animal figurines were found around the plinth of the Asokan capital (*A. S. I., A. R.*, 1907-8, p. 186).

RANGAMATI (Bengal). Rangamati is situated on the west bank of Bhagirathi, 6 miles below Behrampur in the district of Murashidabad. Some clay figurines of the Gupta period were found there (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1928-29, pl. XLIV b, d).

SABHAR (Bengal). Sabhar is situated in Dacca district. An oval terracotta plaque with the figure of Vishnu with *ayudhapurushas*, belonging to 7-8th century, was found at this place (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1927-28, p. 112).

SAGARDVIPA (Bengal). It is a site that has yielded some archaic figurines and a plaque of Vishnu, which are now in Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University.

SAHET-MAHET (U. P.). Sahet and Mahet the two villages situated on the south bank of Rapti, and on the border of Gonda and Bahraich districts, about ten miles from Balrampur, have been identified as the site of *Srāvastī*, the ancient capital of Kosala. A number of clay bas-relief plaques of Gupta period and a few figures were discovered there during the excavations in 1904-1912. In the excavations of 1958-59, moulded plaques of *mithunas* were found in the layers of Period II (mid-third to mid-first centuries B. C.) (*I. A.*, 1958-59, p. 50).

SANKARA (Aligarh, U. P.). Terracotta figurines were found in an exploration conducted by the Muslim University, Aligarh (*I. A.*, 1961, p. 32).

SANKISA (U. P.). Sankisa is situated 23 miles west of Fatehgarh and has been identified as the ancient *Saṅkasya*. Cunningham had discovered a number of clay figurines from this site. One of them, which he has illustrated, is a female figure in *lila-kamala* pose, two of them were of *Gajalakshmi* and one of a male figure playing harp (*C. A. S. R.*, Vol. XI, p. 24-29). Long after him an excavation was conducted by Hiranand Sastri and it yielded a large number of figurines including beautiful Gupta heads, and a large

number of clay elephants (*J. U. P. H. S.*, Vol. III, p. 97-118).

SARAI MOHANA (Varanasi, U. P.). Animal and human terracotta figurines were found in the excavations in the N. B. P. layers in 1967-1968 (*I. A.*, 1967-68, p. 49, pl. xxii).

SOHGAURA (Gorakhpur, U. P.). In an excavation, in the post-N. B. P. period two terracotta figurines, one with Śunga head-dress and the other with foreign features were found (*I. A.*, 1961-62, p. 56).

SARNATH (U. P.). Sarnath, the site of Buddha's first preaching, lies three and a half miles to the north of the city of Banaras. A number of Buddhist clay figures were found there.

SINTHAL (U. P.). Sinthal is a village in Parcilly district, where 6 terracotta figurines of Kushāna period were found in 1908 while digging a tank. These figurines are now in Lucknow Museum.

SONEPUR (Gaya, Bihar). In excavations the figures of birds and snakes were found in the layers of Period II (N. B. P.) and birds and female torsos in the layers of Period III (beginning of Christian era) (*I. A.*, 1955-60, p. 14).

SUNDERBAN (Bengal). Sunderban is situated in 24 Pargana. From many places in that area, terracotta figurines have been found and are in Asutosh Museum.

SURYAPUR (U. P.). Two beautiful Gupta heads, which were presented to Asutosh Museum by Bahadur Singh Singhi, were found at some place named Suryapur in Uttar Pradesh, according to the label attached to them. Since there are a number of places of this name, it is not possible to identify the exact place.

TAMLUK (BENGAL). Tamruk is the ancient port town of Tamralipti, which is so frequently mentioned in the early classical Buddhist literature. A very beautiful female figurine was found in the beds of Rupanarayan river in 1888 which is now in Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (formerly

it was in Indian Institute, Oxford). In 1921—22 some clay figurines were found by K. N. Dikshit (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1921—22, p. 74—75). The excavations in 1940—41 brought to light some terracotta figurines, which are described by T. N. Ramachandran in *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, pp. 226—39. Find of some terracotta figurines datable to third century B. C. is mentioned in *I. A.* (1954—55, p. 50).

TEAI (SARAN, BIHAR). In an exploration conducted by State Archaeology, Bihar, terracotta human heads were found (*I. A.*, 1962—63, p. 6).

TILDAH (MIDNAPUR, WEST BENGAL). Chandpur mound in the village Tildah has yielded terracotta figurines mostly of the Gupta period (*I. A.*, 1954—55, p. 23).

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Abbreviations

<i>A.S.I.A.R.</i> or <i>ASIAR</i>	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.
<i>C.A.S.R.</i>	Cunningham's Archaeological Survey Report.
<i>I.A.</i>	Indian Archaeology—a review.
<i>I.H.Q.</i>	Indian Historical Quarterly.
<i>J.I.S.O.A.</i>	Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
<i>J.U.P.H.S.</i> or <i>JUPHS</i>	Journal of the U. P. Historical Society.



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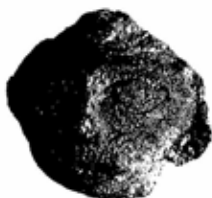
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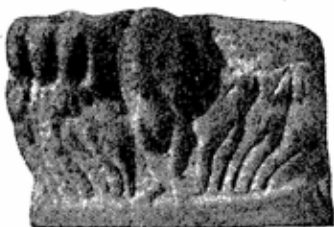


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31	1	head-drcss	head-dress
40	28	a women's	a woman's
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